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Waves of Protest in West Bank November 29

Israeli military authorities placed Dheisheh and Kalandia refugee camps in the Bethlehem and Ramallah areas under curfew November 30 after youths attacked Israeli cars with Molotov cocktails. At least eight youths from the two camps were arrested.

In Dheisheh camp, which has a population of 10,000, youths hurled gasoline bottles at Israeli cars on Friday night as they passed the camp on their way to Hebron area settlements. Israel Radio reported that there were no casualties or damages. Immediately after the incident, Israeli troops raided the camp and arrested seven youths. Reliable sources in Dheisheh said that Israeli soldiers struck Burhan Attallah on his face with a gun butt as they arrested him. Also arrested were Ibrahim Obeid, Ziad Ayyash, Fayez Jarallah, Mohammed al-Walaji, Khaled al-Elaimi and Hakim Mizher.

Israeli soldiers also raided and searched several houses in the camp. Israeli troops clamped a curfew on the camp for three days. It was lifted December 3.

In Kalandia refugee camp, a second Molotov cocktail attack triggered similar punitive measures. Sources in the camp said that a number of youths were arrested as soldiers declared a curfew. The source also said that at least one youth remains in detention.

Elsewhere in the West Bank, a protest demonstration erupted in Nablus after Friday prayers. Protesters reportedly chanted anti-Israeli slogans. Youths also threw stones at Israeli military patrols. Israeli troops quickly dispersed the demonstrators and placed the old part of Nablus (*Qasabeh* neighbourhood) and the central market areas under curfew.

Demonstrations and strikes prevailed in various parts of the West Bank on the previous day, November 29, in commemoration of the 1947 UN plan to partition Palestine, which was rejected by Palestinians at the time and which led to the takeover of Palestine by Zionist forces in 1948.

November 29, Bethlehem University — Soldiers remove a stone barricade after chasing students away with tear gas.

PNC Resolutions Urge PLO Unity

The 17th session of the Palestine National Council (PNC) concluded eight days of deliberations November 29 with a final statement stressing the principles of unity within the PLO and independence of Palestinian decision-making.

The statement, read by Nabil Sha'ath, head of the PNC's political committee, outlined the position taken regarding Palestinian relations with the confrontation states of Jordan, Egypt and Syria. The statement condemned the intra-Palestinian fighting in Tripoli and Syrian and Libyan interference in the revolution. It called for an escalation of armed struggle against Israel and increased cooperation between the PLO and Jordan in finding an acceptable solution to the Palestinian issue.

The PNC communique, however, formally rejected UN resolution 242 which King Hussein of Jordan had proposed in his opening speech November 22 as a basis for a Palestinian-Jordanian move towards a peaceful settlement. The PNC delegates also rejected the Camp David accords and the Reagan plan for not recognizing the rights of the Palestinian people to return, to self-determination and to an independent state. They urged the convening of an international conference on the Middle East conflict in which the PLO would be a full partner.

Specifically regarding Palestinian-Jordanian relations, the communique said the PNC proposed steps to improve relations and instructed the new PLO executive committee to look into ways and means to strengthen this relationship, based on the Fez Arab summit resolutions.

Concerning relations with Syria, the PNC called for reconciliation based on mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of either party. It called for adhering to decision made in previous Arab summits on a solution to the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict. It also called for "joint struggle" against Israeli occupation forces.

Concerning Palestinian-Egyptian relations, the statement stressed Egypt's role in the Middle East and international community, urging the PLO to "follow a policy towards Egypt that agrees with developments in Egyptian policy on the condition that this is done in cooperation with the Arab countries." It added that "recent political developments in Egypt and its support for the Palestinian people demand that relations between the Palestinian and Egyptian peoples be strengthened."

PNC observers believe the non-committed tone of the PNC communique is intended to leave the door open for PLO opposition groups who boycotted the PNC to participate in future national dialogue and decision-making.

The PNC's conclusion dealt with the election of a new executive committee, and the re-election of Yasir Arafat as chairman. For the first time in PLO history, the executive committee chairman was elected by members of the PNC rather than by committee members, as specified by article 13 of the PLO bylaws. It is believed Arafat was pushing for this to give himself a freer hand by being accountable to the PNC rather than directly to the committee which meets on a regular basis. Arafat's nomination was made by Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), member of Fatah central committee, and was acclaimed by PNC members. Khalaf is known to have opposed some of Arafat's previous decisions, particularly his trip to Cairo last year.

In what observers see as a clear victory for Arafat, the new executive committee guarantees him a quorum of supporters by including six independent members known to lean towards his political line. It also includes two Fatah members, in addition to Arafat, a representative from the Arab Liberation Front (ALF) and another from the pro-Arafat splinter of the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF). Three seats were left open for members of the four-faction Democratic Alliance which boycotted the conference. The alliance is comprised of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, (PFLP),

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Members of the Newly-Elected PLO Executive Committee

1. Yasir Arafat. (Fatah) Chairman.
2. Farouq Qaddoumi (Fatah).
3. Mahmoud Abbas (Fatah).
4. Abd al-Fahim Ahmad (Arab Liberation Front).
5. Muhammad Abbas (Palestine Liberation Front).
6. Jamal Sourani (Independent) Secretary.
7. Bishop Elia Kouri (Independent)
8. Fahd Qawasmi (Independent).
9. Muhammad Milhem (Independent)
10. Abd al-Razzaq Yahiya (Independent).
11. Jawood al-Ghusein (Independent) (Palestine National Fund).

12, 13, 14 — open for the four factions of the Democratic Alliance.

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Sarafand, south Lebanon – Israelis wounded in resistance forces attack

1 DEAD, 4 WOUNDED

Nervous Israeli Soldiers Fire Indiscriminately in S. Lebanon

A Lebanese woman was killed and three other civilians wounded December 4 when Israeli soldiers opened fire at villagers in Jibshit, near Nabatiyeh in south Lebanon. The villagers had stoned an Israeli army patrol as it attempted to enter the village to arrest two residents. The patrol opened fire in response, killing the woman and injuring three others, according to Israeli reports. Additional Israeli soldiers were brought to the village and held it under siege for five hours.

At the Palestinian refugee camp of Mieh Mieh, near Sidon, one refugee was wounded December 3 when an Israeli soldier opened fire at people around him following an explosion in the area. The explosion was later discovered to be a tire blowout from an Israeli vehicle which frightened the soldier. The shooting spree caused havoc in the refugee camp and people ran in all directions.

Among Israeli casualties, three Israeli soldiers were injured in south Lebanon December 4 when their armoured vehicle ran over a land mine, an Israeli army spokesperson said. The area was searched for more mines. No details on the extent of the soldiers' injuries were released.

Two days earlier, an Israeli soldier was wounded when his patrol was ambushed near Sidon, in southern Lebanon, an army spokesperson announced. The area was searched but no one was apprehended.

In intra-Lebanese battles, north of the Israeli lines at the Awali River, fierce fighting was reported in the mountain areas around Beirut and in the capital. Fighting broke out in the Kharoub region December 2 between Lebanese army and Druze militias only days before the army was scheduled to extend its control over the coastal road area south of Beirut December 6. The army's move, however, was later postponed due to the fighting and objections from Druze leader Walid Jumblatt that the action would isolate the Druze-dominated area. Sporadic fighting was also reported inside Beirut. Lebanese police reports said two people were injured in the 12-hour fighting in the Kharoub.

Israeli armoured vehicles backed by helicopters and gunboats violated the Awali lines and crossed north to the Kharoub region. Correspondents in the region reported that 13 armoured vehicles took part in the reconnaissance operation.

The Kharoub is 25 kilometres southeast of Beirut and connects the coastal road linking Beirut with southern Lebanon. Syria is trying to mediate the Kharoub army deployment, hoping that the Lebanese army will take control of the area in order to move south to the Israeli occupied areas following an expected Israeli army pull out.

Military talks between Lebanon and Israel, under the auspices of the UN forces in Lebanon, on Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon did not produce any significant results all week. Six rounds of military talks have been held so far at UNIFIL's headquarters in Ras al-Naqoura, on the Lebanese-Israeli borders. The talks so far have concentrated on the deployment of Lebanese army regulars and UNIFIL forces in areas to be vacated by the Israeli army. A point of conflict in the talks is the role of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army. Israel wants its surrogate militia to dominate the occupied southern regions while the Lebanese government wants the regular army to control the area.

United States Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Richard Murphy is expected in the area soon to move the stalled talks. He is expected to visit Lebanon, Syria and Israel. His trip may include Jordan and Egypt.

Egypt, Jordan Coordinate Moves

Jordan's King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak announced at the end of Hussein's three-day state visit to Egypt December 2 the need for an international conference to solve the Palestinian problem. Their joint communique said that a conference attended by all parties concerned, including the five permanent members to the UN Security Council, is the only solution to the Middle East political stalemate, the crux of which is the Palestinians.

Local Palestinian observers say the Jordanian-Egyptian coordination represents an axis working on developing a "new Arab initiative" for solving the Palestinian problem. Jordan is also reportedly leading a campaign to return Egypt to the Arab fold through an Arab summit conference.

The Jordanian monarch's visit to Cairo followed Jordan's unilateral decision to resume diplomatic and political relations with Egypt last month. Most Arab states, including Jordan, broke off diplomatic relations and voted Egypt out of the Arab League in 1979 after President Sadat signed the Camp David agreement with Israel under US auspices. Hussein's visit was the first official tour by any of the boycotting states. The meeting, which came only a few days after the conclusion of the PLO's 17th PNC session in Amman, was aimed primarily at coordinating future political moves with Egypt in order to come out with an Arab peace initiative, as Egyptian sources said in Cairo at the start of the visit. Reports from Cairo said that the two sides discussed in detail new political developments in the Middle East, including the resolutions of the 17th PNC session.

The two sides also called

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THIS WEEK'S CENSORSHIP

Following is a breakdown of censorship cuts for issue 240 December 7, 1984:

Number of original articles submitted to censors 13
Number of articles totally censored out 2
Number of articles partially censored but used 2
Number of articles passed 9

Victim's Family Sues Israeli State, Terrorist After Rocket Attack

The family of 20-year-old Jamal Matwar, from Sa'ir in the Hebron district, who was killed in a rocket attack on an Arab bus in Jerusalem last October, filed a civil damage suit December 3 in Tel Aviv court.

The state of Israel and the assailant, army corporal David Ben Shimol, were named in the suit as the responsible parties. Ben Shimol, who confessed in court to the crime, fired a LAW rocket he had stolen from an army storehouse at the Arab bus, killing Matwar and injuring several others. Ben Shimol's defence is being paid for by the ultra-racist Kach movement, which condoned the attack and others against Palestinians.

The state was named as an accomplice in the attack because of the assailant's rank as soldier and his use of a weapon stolen from the army.

The family's lawyer, Darwish Nasser, was quoted in the local press as saying that the government is responsible for Ben Shimol's act because it failed to carry out its duty in assuring no dangerous weapons fall into the hands of irresponsible citizens.

This is the first civil damage case involving Jewish terrorism filed in an Israeli court. However, a Palestinian family received compensation from the government a year ago when a member of their family was killed by soldiers on practice manoeuvres.

No specific amount was named in the suit because of Israel's unstable inflation rate. (Translation: Al Sha'ab, Al Quds, December 5, 1984)

Israeli Prosecutor: Military Fears WB Elections

Israel's state prosecutor, Renato Barak, said December 4 that military authorities refuse to conduct municipal elections in the West Bank for fear of pro-PLO leaders being elected.

The prosecutor was responding to a High Court order asking military authorities to explain why no municipal elections are permitted in the Hebron district city of Dura. Seven Dura residents had applied to the court for a ruling on a joint military decision made by Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin, a military commander and Binyamin Ben Eliezer, head of the Israeli "civil administration," to ban scheduled elections in Dura and to extend the term of office of the existing council.

In his reply, Barak said the authorities had supervised municipal elections in 1972 and 1976 but that "certain Palestinian factions used the elections to establish power bases." Barak added that "under the cover of the municipal elections, political elements which came to power encouraged active resistance to the authority of the Israeli army, something which no military governor can accept." Barak said that at present, "The military authorities have good reason to believe that a new election in the West Bank will bring PLO men into municipal offices."

The Israeli High Court will continue deliberation on the case after receiving the state prosecutor's statement.

Dunums Declared 'State Land'

More than 1500 dunums of agricultural land near Arroub village in the Hebron district were declared state land last week. The declaration forbids owners from any further work on their plots.

The Israeli deputy military commander in Hebron verbally informed villagers from Sheiukh-Arroub November 7 that plots in Qinieh, Khalit al-Sheiukh, Rahweh, Wadi al-Dour and Dilbeh areas are now considered to be owned by the Israeli military government. According to residents of the village, the deputy commander came to Sheiukh-Arroub, gathered some of the villagers with land deeds in the targeted area, took them to the plots and informed them by pointing his finger to an open space that most of the land within their sight was confiscated. The military officer told them the area to be closed was approximately 300 dunums.

When residents were unable to determine the exact area which was confiscated, they visited the military government's office and asked that the area be designated on a map. On November 30, the deputy commander returned to the village with Israeli surveyors who pointed out to the residents the exact area confiscated. The residents then surveyed the land and found it to be five times the area the deputy commander had originally marked off.

The village residents told *Al Fajr* the confiscated area is agricultural land from which they earn their livelihood. Sales from the crops grown there, such as grapes, wheat and plums, make up the village's primary source of income. More than 40 families work the land in the confiscated area.

The land falls midway between Kiryat Arba and Efrat settlements. It is believed the military government plans to extend the belt of settlements surrounding the West Bank with a new settlement to be constructed in the vicinity of Arroub.

Israelis Ban Lecture Tour of Palestinian Artist

Israeli authorities prevented Palestinian artist Suleiman Mansour from travelling to Sweden November 30 on "security" grounds. Mansour was scheduled to begin a speaking tour on Palestinian folk and contemporary art.

Mansour, 36, the vice-chairperson of the League of Artists in the occupied territories, attempted four times in one week to cross the Allenby bridge to Jordan but was stopped by authorities who imposed a *de facto* ban on any outside travel by the artist.

The Swedish institute, concerned with cultural matters, had planned to sponsor Mansour's tour, which was to include a number of universities, art schools and community centres. Mansour was also expected to participate in a symposium on Palestine in which a number of Palestinian artists and writers were to appear.

A spokesperson for the Israeli interior minister told a Swedish Embassy official who questioned Mansour's banning that it was for "security reasons." The spokesperson said that within 10 to 12 days the ban might be lifted.

Authorities' refusal to allow Mansour to travel was strongly condemned in Sweden. A member of the Palestinian solidarity committee in Sweden told *Al Fajr* that the Israeli action ruined many activities planned for Mansour's visit.

Swedish television ran a story on Suleiman Mansour's plight, filming him as he travelled from Jerusalem to the bridge and as he returned.

Suleiman Mansour is a leading artist in the occupied territories. His paintings and posters have been widely circulated and he has won a number of local and international art awards. Mansour has been a contributing cartoonist for *Al Fajr* English weekly since the paper began in 1980.

Plan for Refugee Protection

Olof Rydbeck, commissioner-general of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), called October 23 for arrangements to be made to protect civilians in south Lebanon in the event of a full or partial withdrawal of Israeli forces.

"Otherwise I very much fear a wave of increased bloodshed," Rydbeck told the special political committee of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Rydbeck said he endorsed Secretary-General de Cuellar's suggestion that troops from UNIFIL be deployed in the Sidon area immediately after an Israeli withdrawal. This would be done to assure the safety of the area's population, including Palestinian refugees.

Rydbeck also expressed concern over the number of severe violations of human rights in south Lebanon. "Very worrying is the almost daily toll reported from south Lebanon of violent deaths, woundings, arrests without charge, kidnappings and disappearances, evictions under threat, extortion and the destruction of property," he said.

Rydbeck said UNRWA was emphasising income-generating projects for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon because they had few other employment opportunities and their freedom of movement was severely restricted. UNRWA runs schools, clinics and relief services for about two million registered Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, Sria, the West Bank and Gaza.

Turning to financial matters, Rydbeck observed that UNRWA's 17,000 locally-recruited staff are paid according to the standard rates in the particular area. Although these salaries are modest, with a typical teacher receiving less than US$5800 a year, the staff as a whole will be receiving increases totalling about US$21 million annually in 1985. These increases are being made, however, against a background of diminishing income. UNRWA received US$191 million in contributions in 1980 compared with only an estimated US$179 million in 1984 although cash needs have grown, Rydbeck said.

Bethlehem Souvenir Shops Shut at Business Peak

Just as pilgrims begin to pour into the area for the Christmas season, the Israeli military officer in charge of tourism closed down the Bethlehem souvenir shops for two weeks and warned six other shopowners against "openly soliciting" tour groups in Manger Square.

Charlie Dabdoub, co-owner of one of the closed shops, the Bethlehem Bazaar, told *Al Fajr* that the Israeli authorities' goal is to destroy the tourist business in Bethlehem. He said that souvenir shopowners have always made contacts with the tour guides who bring groups to Manger Square. "Since before the Israelis came we have been carrying out our traditional way of doing business without any harassments," he said.

The major tourist sites for Christian pilgrims are in the occupied West Bank. The government-supported Israeli tourist industry has increasingly tried to make inroads into the Christian market, especially in the last few years. Christians represent the bulk of tourists to Israel.

Shukri Batarseh, owner of the Seven Gates souvenir shop, criticised the action by the Israeli tourism officer and his general attitude towards Bethlehem merchants. He added that the officer, Zvi Nafo, not only closed his store and Dabdoub's for two weeks but also sent a circular announcing the closure to Israeli tourist and travel agencies. Batarseh said that the circular will have a much longer and more damaging effect than the two-week closure.

The Israeli military authorities base their move on Jordanian law which empowers the minister of tourism to reprimand tourist agencies if he considers "their action is harmful to the tourism profession." Israeli military officers have operated in place of relevant Jordanian ministers since the 1967 occupation. Bethlehem Lawyer Jodeh Shahwan commented to *Al Fajr* that the Israeli authorities "try to find the law that fits their needs and apply it."

Bethlehem's Mayor Elias Freij said he was upset by the moves against the local tourist shops. He said he told Nafo by phone that his action, which coincided with the arrival of a tourist ship to Haifa's port, will destroy the local tourism industry, Bethlehem's major business.

Volunteer Farming Campaign

The Higher Committee for Voluntary Work in the occupied territories began late last month to distribute and plant olive seedlings to farmers at half the market price.

Moharram al-Barghouti, the committee head, said December 3 that so far they have distributed and planted at least 15,000 seedlings throughout the West Bank. He explained that the offer has attracted many more farmers than anticipated. "In addition to the reduced price, we carry the seedlings to the fields and plant them for the farmers," he said. The committee is the only body undertaking such a task.

The committee brings seedlings from the Jenin area and sells the prestigious white (*Nabali*) brand for 30 piasters. The regular market price for the same brand is between 50 and 60 piasters.

The committee opened regional offices for distributing the seedlings. Al-Barghouti said their campaign aims at encouraging farmers to plant their fields and stick to their land. "By planting fields, we boost farmers' steadfastness on their land," he said. He also said that they intend to help farmers against exploitation by sky rocketing seedling prices, which doubled in price last year.

Palestinian scouts at Damascus Gate, Jerusalem December 5 celebrating the anniversary of the Prophet Mohammed's birthday/AO photo

4 LEBANESE WOMEN HELD IN NEVE TERTZA

Israeli Women Protest Illegal Detention

Several dozen women, from the Women Against Occupation movement, the Democratic Women's Movement in Israel and the Committee for Civil Rights in Israel, demonstrated in front of Neve Tertza prison November 30 in protest of the continued detention of four Lebanese women in Israel.

The four women — Raghda Abed al-Rida Ayoub from the village of Tibnit, mother of three children, Fatmeh Mohammed Mousa al-Basha, mother of five children, Widad Isma'il Kharbiti, from al-Bus refugee camp and mother of four children, and Leila Ali Shur, an 18-year-old from Tyre — were arrested between April and June 1984 by Israeli soldiers and soldiers from the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army on unspecified charges.

More than 25 women activists gathered in front of the prison displaying placards calling for the immediate release of the four women. "Release the Lebanese women prisoners," one sign in Hebrew read. The women also chanted anti-Israeli slogans. Israeli police who were present throughout the protest did not intervene.

The protest came after repeated efforts by the four women to win their release. Last month they sent letters to the director of the women's prison demanding that they be returned to Lebanon and that they be held in their country in accordance with international law. They also went on a three-day hunger strike to publicise their demand. The Israeli authorities, however, refused to yield to their demands.

Ma'oz: 'Dismantling Settlements Will Trigger Civil War'

An advisor on Arab Affairs to Israeli Minister-Without-Portfolio Ezer Weizman surprised an audience of Israeli and foreign reporters November 30 by saying he expects an Israeli civil war to erupt if settlers are forced to evacuate settlements in the occupied territories.

Speaking on Palestinian leadership in the West Bank (the title of his recent book) at the Truman Institute, Professor Moshe Ma'oz, chairman of the Department of Islamic and Middle East Studies at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, warned that any settlement to the Palestinian issue requiring dismantlement of settlements in the occupied territories would have negative repercussions on Israeli society. Ma'oz said, however, that he did not expect a settlement to be possible.

Responding to questions on his opinion of a political future for West Bank Palestinians, Ma'oz said he believed the Palestinians in the occupied territories would be willing to accept coexistence with Israel if given enough freedom in return. He said he would have allowed the West Bank and Gaza members of the Palestine National Council (PNC) to attend the recent PNC meeting in Amman because, as he put it, "they will serve as a moderating voice within the PNC." Ma'oz labelled the PLO leadership as "extremist and uncompromising" while West Bank leadership, he said, is "moderate, compromising and pragmatic."

Ma'oz said that in 1972 the late Israeli premier Golda Meir was seriously thinking of some kind of autonomy for the Palestinians closely linked to Israel and Jordan to be coordinated with the then conservative leaders in the occupied territories. Meir, however, soon discarded the notion out of fear that autonomy might lead to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, the professor explained.

IN DHEISHEH'S COLLECTIVE PUNISHMENT CASE

High Court Rejects Prosecutor's Denial

Israeli High Court Judge Miriam Ben Porat rejected December 6 an affidavit presented by the Israeli prosecutor Renato Barak in which he denied that collective punishment is levied against residents of the Dheisheh refugee camp.

In deliberating the petition of 14 Dheisheh residents against Israeli military officials, Ben Porat demanded that the prosecutor answer the High Court in a more detailed manner within 21 days.

Ben Porat asked the prosecutor to answer why the military authorities do not stop the illegal harassment of the plaintiffs and the policy of discrimination through arbitrary curfews, reopen the camp's entrances, stop settlers from demonstrating and threatening the camp residents, protect the residents in accordance with international laws, and stop the provocative actions of the settlers including the use of armed civilian patrols.

The Israeli High Court is expected to continue deliberation. Israeli advocate Felicia Langer is representing the Dheisheh plaintiffs.

Israelis Arrested at Dheisheh

Israeli troops arrested 22 Israeli activists from the Committee in Solidarity with Bir Zeit University who demonstrated December 1 in front of Dheisheh refugee camp near Bethlehem. They were held until evening at Bethlehem police station and then released on bail. The demonstration was held to protest militant settler activist Rabbi Moshe Levinger's provocations against the camp. Levinger, from Kiryat Arba settlement near Hebron, and some of his followers have been camping across the street from Dheisheh for the last month demanding that Israeli authorities evacuate camp residents to stop stone-throwing.

More than 100 activists from the committee gathered at noon at Dheisheh's western entrance, across from Levinger. The demonstrators carried placards and chanted slogans denouncing the settler-leader and the brutal Israeli occupation. The placards, encircled in barbed wire, read: "Permanent Solidarity with Dheisheh Camp." The activists also chanted: "Levinger decides, the army executes," and "Levinger-Criminal."

Israeli troops, who were enforcing a curfew on Dheisheh since the previous day following a molotov cocktail attack on an Israeli patrol, dispersed the demonstrators by force, and then arrested 22. Gidon Spiro, spokesperson for the committee, was among those arrested and taken to Bethlehem police station for questioning and booking.

Uriel Kitron, a committee activist, told *Al Fajr* that soon after the demonstrators arrived at Dheisheh, soldiers instructed them not to display placards. "Soldiers then told us that there were too many demonstrators and we must all go home," he said, "although just as many of Levinger's supporters were watching on the other side of the street." When committee members refused to disperse, soldiers began rounding them up.

One Dheisheh resident said demonstrators continued chanting anti-occupation slogans even after soldiers arrested them and put them into cars.

Committee members were driven to Bethlehem police station where they were held until 9:45 pm and then released on bail. Kitron said Israeli policemen attempted to interrogate them but the activists refused to say anything other than that they had done nothing illegal. He said that contrary to the way police usually deal with Arabs, the police treated the activists well.

Kitron criticised Israeli press coverage of the demonstration as inaccurate. He described as "ridiculous" an item by the Israeli government news agency *Itim* charging that demonstrations by the committee always spark trouble.

He also expressed concern about the future of Palestinian refugee camps. "We are afraid that they want to yield to Gush Emunim demands to destroy the camps, particularly Dheisheh — which is the most obvious target — and disperse their people," he warned.

Above: The arm of an Israeli demonstrator sticks out from the five Israeli soldiers arresting him in front of Dheisheh camp, where the CSBZU were protesting against militant settlers. Below: CSBZU making a solidarity visit to Bir Zeit University.

Truckloads of Israeli soldiers have been guarding settler militant Rabbi Moshe Levinger during his month-long sit-in across from Dheisheh camp. The van where Levinger stays is flanked by supporters' cars/AO photo

The Dawn
AL FAJR

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Levinger and Dheisheh

While local and international media focused on the news extravaganzas of the Palestine National Council meeting and the visit of King Hussein to Egypt, the everyday situation in the occupied territories remains worrisome and oppressive. At Dheisheh refugee camp outside Bethlehem militant settler leader Rabbi Moshe Levinger has installed himself as unwelcome "neighbour" for the fourth week in a row waiting for Dheisheh's residents to be ejected.

Levinger's provocative action, which has drawn active protest from anti-occupation Israeli activists, has much wider-ranging and permanent plans than simply to stand up to a few stone-throwing youths. Levinger, who is protected by the Israeli army and constantly supported by Jewish settlers, not to mention surprise visits by racist star Meir Kahane, aims at pressuring the Labour/Likud government into starting up a new settlement on the rocks opposing the "troublesome camp." Levinger's illogical demand, even from a settler's point of view, appears to be more serious with time. A short look at Levinger's settlement history shows that he has been the militant vanguard and trend-setter of Israeli settlement ambitions.

In 1969 he initiated the implantation of a settler presence in Arab Hebron. His actions at the time were carried out during a similar Labour/Likud coalition and were unusual in that they established an Israeli colonial presence irrespective of agricultural or economic feasibility. What Levinger did in 1969 became the trend in 1977 under the Begin's Likud government.

Today Levinger — and those who support him passively or actively — aim not to make rocks bloom or put greenhouses in arid areas but to liquidate once and for all the symbol and core of the Palestinian cause — the refugees.

But the attempts of Levinger, Kahane and Ben Porat will not fare any better than the attempts of Golda Meir, Begin or Sharon.

Voting in the 17th PNC: *"We have no other alternatives but unity or internal fighting. What do we choose?"*

Encountering the Dangerous Stage After the PNC in Amman

by Said al-Ghazali

Our people, after the 17th PNC in Amman, are facing a difficult stage, one where we must mend the rift in the PLO and maintain national unity. Unity is essential for the continuation of the Palestinian struggle. This struggle must be rooted in national unity, the independent Palestinian decision and an agreement among all Palestinians to fight against division and disunity. We must foster the national aim of working together to achieve national unity.

This stage through which we are now passing is of great importance and can be seen as a turning point in which our various reactions to the PNC session and decisions will be revealed. Are we going to choose the road towards national unity or disunity? Based on the decisions we make now and on our various reactions to the PNC session we will either achieve a positive result of national unity or a negative result of disunity, internal fighting, division and loss.

There is no doubt that we are facing a critical time during which negative attitudes will please no one but our enemies. All those responsible to our people, despite their particular stands, must decide what is to be. Either there will be a united PLO, the sole representative of the Palestinian people, or there will not be a PLO but individual groups and offshoots involved in internal fighting.

Whatever the reasons for the current crisis, whatever the events that preceded this dangerous stage, we have to realise that the world is keenly observing us. They are watching the political developments on the Palestinian arena, watching for any negative results of the PNC which would gravely affect the Palestinian condition and lead to the danger of intra-Palestinian war exploding in the political arena and organisational structure and even among the masses themselves.

Perhaps some people will accuse me of naivete or extreme idealism if I say yes, we need national unity and no, we don't need any action which would dissipate the struggle and unity of the Palestinian people. I don't wish to dispute this charge of idealism but only to assert that no one can deny that we are standing at the crossroads of an important decision. One road leads to national unity and requires patience, rational thinking, flexibility and sacrifice. The other road leads to division and requires nothing more than the chanting of empty slogans and the use of terms like collaboration, deviation, dissension and surrender.

This second path is no doubt easier to follow. It is very easy to chant slogans, hurl insults and uselessly charge one another. It is very difficult to control the negative results of such a strategy, however. There will necessarily be division and internal fighting, leading towards the dreadful point at which we lose everything: the homeland, effective representation, the independent decision and all political effectiveness.

The first road of national unity requires *much more from our leaders. There is no doubt that self-control, compromise, constructive effort* and national dialogue between all factions is the correct manner in which to handle this stage. However, it is a very difficult path to tred, requiring persistance. There will be many hardships to overcome and a long period of dialogue, discussion, compromise, and overcoming stubbornness and differences of opinion until the revolution regains its unity and reverent position. Only then will we be the "strong Palestinian equation no one can ignore or bypass," as Yasir Arafat said in the PNC session.

I want to stress here our common national goal and Palestinian national interest. I ignore all particular opinions of the left or right in the PLO. I do not wish to discuss the differences of any in this stage because we search for positive stands which unite us. We want to find the means by which we are directed to achievement of our national and legitimate rights, including the establishment of a national, independent state. We wish to stress our common heritage as Palestinians evident in all the various national stands. We stress the common nationalism in all our Palestinian institutions. We have no other alternatives but unity or internal fighting. What do we choose?

We are all children of Palestine, children of the Palestinian revolution, which includes workers, peasants, intellectuals and the bourgeoisie. It is not right that one segment of the population alone control the Palestinian national decision. This decision moves in the wider Palestinian arena in which all of us meet. Our differences, our various views, our interests, our aspirations, our national dreams — including our shared grief, pain, wretchedness and suffering — are all part of the common Palestinian consciousness. This consciousness includes all our PLO factions, institutions, forums and committees. We must all work in this common consciousness towards the unity of the Palestinian people, who will agree on common political and organisational strategies to foster PLO

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AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

The Messianic Credo of Ultranationalism

by Shuki Ben Ami

David, the soldier suspected of firing the rocket at the bus [a LAW rocket was fired October 28 at an Arab bus in Jerusalem killing one and wounding 11 — ed.], grew up in the Katamonim Quarter of Jerusalem. I visited his neighbourhood this week and spoke to some of his friends and neigbours. I was told by many of them that the only way to deal with terrorism was by employing terrorism in turn. This notion is quite popular among settlers and members of Gush Emunim; likewise it is common in the country's oriental neighbourhoods. Thus, a strange alliance has been struck between the children of well-off Ashkenazi families who grew up in petit-bourgeois neighbourhoods and were educated in religious-nationalist institutions, and young oriental Jews, most of whom grew up in underprivileged neighbourhoods. In the slums many people admire brute strength.

Ben-Shimol got what he wanted. Today, he's looked upon as "a real man." He is seen as a fellow who didn't flinch at taking the law into his own hands and avenging the lost honour of his people. Many of those I spoke with in Katamonim believe that this is the only way we can deal with the Arabs. Snippets of his statement to the court are quoted on the street. "He isn't a *wimp," I was told. Once an insecure teenager, a petty criminal* and police informer, Ben-Shimol has been elevated to a local hero. He has proven himself worthy of being a member of a superior race — a race of mighty conquerors. Thanks to Kahane, the riff-raff of society can now unburden themselves of their inner violence by victimizing those whom they consider inferior. Extremist nationalist movements provide an outlet for those unable to cope, think clearly or argue in a rational manner. Israeli fascism has now become their refuge. There, they can partake of the prowess and "togetherness' which the clenched fist symbolises for them.

Sociologists are convinced that if the economic situation continues to deteriorate, Kahane and other fascist groups will receive more and more support. Ultra-nationalism can provide them with the sense of security and prowess which the ambiguities of everyday life and the economic situation deny them.

In the religious-nationalist camp the situation is not as cut and dried. Many religious-nationalist educators are asking themselves where they went wrong. There are quite a few people in Gush Emunim and the West Bank settlements who feel that the movement has gone astray. After the Jewish underground was exposed, the majority of the settlements on the West Bank came out in support of their actions. Although there were condemnations, they were kept at a whisper. The split in Gush Emunim between those who advocate terrorism and those who oppose it is widening. The debate has revolved around the philosophy of Rabbi Kook. The advocates of terrorism distinguish between the laws of the Torah and the laws of the state. Rabbi Israel Ariel, for instance, claims that to rebel against the authority of the government is not tantamount to rebelling against the Kingdom of Israel. Both sides in the debate have sought to strengthen their positions by enlisting the double-edged and highly ambiguous philosophy of Rabbi Kook.

All of the suspects in the Jewish underground were directly or indirectly influenced by Rabbi Kook's ideological legacy. Many of their opponents have lashed out against the manner in which the members of the underground have appropriated his mantle. Rabbi Kook was the chief rabbi of Israel from 1921 until the day of his death in 1936; his deep regard for the Jewish people and the land of Israel have become proverbial. Moreover, his relations with the Zionist movement and the pioneers have been described as warm and friendly. He saw the national reawakening of the Jewish people as the beginning of a return to religion. And yet, Rabbi Kook was in the forefront of the campaign to absolve the murderers of Chaim Arlosoroff (a left-wing Zionist leader) of their guilt.

In an article recently published in *Nekuda*, the journal of the Jewish settlers in the occupied territories, David Hanshke calls for tackling the question of how and why religious Zionism went astray. According to the author, Rabbi Kook's philosophical position was loaded with inner dialectical tensions; there is *nothing clear-cut or straightforward in* his brand of thought. Hanshke goes on to conjecture that the tension and bi-polarity of Rabbi Kook's thought was axiomatic for both the rabbi himself and his closest disciples. However, the underground and its sympathisers have appropriated it and turned it into a crude body of beliefs, and do not understand his philosophy in any save the most superficial sense.

> "THANKS TO KAHANE, THE RIFF-RAFF OF SOCIETY CAN NOW UNBURDEN THEMSELVES OF THEIR INNER VIOLENCE BY VICTIMISING THOSE WHOM THEY CONSIDER INFERIOR."

The author of the article goes on to demonstrate an example of the bi-polar thinking of the rabbi. In a eulogy delivered at the graveside of members of the *Ha'poel Hatza'ir* movement (a pre-state socialist-Zionist movement) who were murdered by Arabs, Rabbi Kook refers to the dead as "our dearly beloved, whom we also despised. Their souls were holy and yet abominable." It is thus easy to see how Kook's philosophy could be enlisted by both sides in the polemical debate now taking place in Gush Emunim. What Hanshke fails to observe is that this quotation also provides an answer to the question that he poses at the outset of his article, namely, how the Jewish underground drew on Rabbi Kook's philosophy to construct an ideological basis for their actions.

The mother of an Israeli soldier killed by resistance forces tries to prevent Citizens Rights MK Mordechai Bar-On from inspecting the privileged conditions in which suspects of the Jewish terror underground were being held in Tel Mond prison this past August: *Making thugs into heros.*

"The rule of the weak repels me," wrote Uri Zvi Greenberg in his poem "Sicarius" published in *Davar* in 1982. (Greenberg's poem celebrates the fanaticism of the terrorists of the Second Temple period — the *Sicarii*, so called from the dagger (*sica* in Latin), who murdered collaborators with Rome.) The Jewish underground and other Jewish terrorists drew on the ideology of fanatic nationalism propagated by Greenberg, whose pseudo-Messianic vision and desire to re-establish the House of King David were fundamental components of the terrorists' ideology. As far back as the 1930's Greenberg did not mince matters; those who rejected his brand of nationalism were branded as traitors who deserved to be "torn to pieces and fed to the rats." *Brit Ha'biryonim* (the Alliance of Bullies, a pre-state organisation of right-wing thugs) served as a cradle for Jewish fascism. Rabbi Kook's religious nationalism fanned the flames of the fire *Brit Ha'biryonim* ignited. The objective of the ultra-nationalists has always been to establish the Kingdom of Israel — a goal which they place above the laws of the state.

The ideology which began to take root in Israel in the aftermath of the June 1967 war has blossomed of late. The conquest and occupation of the Old City of Jerusalem, 'Judea and Samaria' and the Golan Heights — seen by many as the return of the Jews to the lands in which their religion first developed — led to a process of messianic fanaticism based on the ancient biblical commandment to settle the land of Israel. With the inception of the messianic era came the un-Jewish ideology of racial superiority. As more and more people rallied to the messianic credo, the humanistic and moralistic aspects of Judaism were ignored or simply sloughed off. Their ears were not attuned to the biblical precepts of social justice and kindness to foreigners.

The desire to hasten the coming of the Messiah and to establish the Third Kingdom of Israel were the primary motives for the underground's plan to attack the Temple Mount (al-Aqsa compound). The destruction of the mosques would clear the way for the construction of the Third Temple. Of course, the Likud's rise to power accelerated this process. The settlement movement began to establish strongholds in the middle of Arab population centres and the government earmarked vast resources for the settlement infrastructure. The belief in the rule of might grew and grew. When the peace agreement with Egypt was signed and the Sinai was slated for evacuation, many government ministers gave the settlers the green light to resist the withdrawal actively, thereby opposing the decisions of the government. The apologetic and even sympathetic stance taken by the authorities cleared the way for the notion that there was nothing wrong in "taking the law into one's own hands." The idea that "might makes right" was gaining ground.

None of the settlers entertained the idea that a Likud government would relinquish any part of the Land of Israel or evacuate the settlements. Many believed that Begin was simply staging a performance and that if protest against the withdrawal became widespread the government would have to renege on the peace agreement. But the withdrawal and bulldozing of the settlements in the Yamit corridor acted as a warning signal for them. Their Likud allies had betrayed them. So it was that they came to believe it was necessary for them to take

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In south Lebanon, two major phenomena of Israeli society can be seen in the conduct and size of its occupying army — growing materialism and delusions of "regional order." Israeli journalist **Shimon Lerer** describes in *Davar* how Israel tries to make soldiers shrug off death by keeping them plied with comforts.

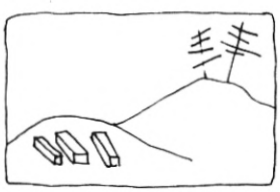
TV and Video: Opiates for the Israeli Army in Lebanon

How do they go about setting up an army outpost in Lebanon? The procedure is really quite simple. First they get hold of a television set, attach a video to it and stick up an aerial; then they plug it into a generator, turn it on and with the remote control gizmo in hand, switch from one channel to the next. Israel TV is par for the course; Lebanese TV — a must; Monte Carlo — very much in demand; Syrian TV — fair to middling; the Voice of Hope — indispensible. Their priorities established, they go from one hilltop to another checking the reception. When a given hilltop passes the "screen test," it's dug out, covered with a sheet of cement, fitted with an underground bunker and surrounded by battle trenches. Then come the soldiers.

The General Command and the engineering corps will deny that this is how they decide where to set up army outposts in Lebanon but the soldiers will tell you that if this isn't the case, it ought to be.

What is a "good" outpost in Lebanon? One where the television — colour of course, lest the soldiers refuse to disembark from the "Safari" trucks that take them to their positions — can stay on 24 hours a day and pick up all the stations in the region. But video sets are even more important than TVs; they must be raring to go when, for the umpteenth time, a blue movie — never in short supply — is loaded into the machine.

During our last stint of reserve duty — our fourth in Lebanon — we had the bad luck to get stuck in an outpost where the TV had gone on the blink. Now this outpost is considered to be one of the better ones (according to the criteria listed above) but without a TV... our mood sank to a record low; it was almost as bad as having to crawl across a minefield. The regulars who were with us had to bear the brunt of the burden as usual; their standing plummeted and the outpost got a bad name. When they went on leave they didn't dare say that they were from outpost X for fear of reactivating the TV curse back home in Israel.



But what about the enemy? The Syrians, Palestinians and Shi'ites? Are Israeli soldiers in Lebanon oblivious to their presence? Are all those newspaper, radio and television reports about mines, bombs, katyusha rockets and sniper fire on Israeli positions just part of a campaign being waged by the "defeatist" mass media to lower morale and smear mud on the good name of the state?

The answer is actually quite simple. Every Israeli soldier in Lebanon knows that the enemy is everywhere. He doesn't leave you for a second; he stalks you, waiting for your alertness to flag and then — bang! And before you know it, he's disappeared into thin air leaving you to play blindman's bluff in the fog. But for an onlooker it would seem that the only thing anyone cares about is TV and videos. It's almost as if the enemy is a diversion. The reason for this is simple enough, though it may raise some people's ire: TV and video are the opiates of the Israeli troops in Lebanon. These technological marvels provide them with a means of escape from an intolerable situation. More and more people have been coming around to the view that the war in Lebanon is totally absurd. Moreover, there is a wall-to-wall consensus on the need to withdraw the army from Lebanon and it has become next to impossible to convince the soldiers that their deployment there is necessary or expedient. But as long as they're in Lebanon, their lives will be constantly in danger and the army brass have no alternative but to try to divert their attention from their suicide mission by whatever means possible. So it is that televisions and videos have become the order of the day.

When it comes down to it, there are really two suicide brigades in Lebanon. The first one is made up of Shi'ite fundamentalists, prepared to ram their cars (loaden with explosives) into army posts and go up in a burst of fire and smoke in order to vouchsafe a place for themselves in the Eden-like Islamic afterlife. The other suicide brigade consists of Israeli soldiers who crisscross the highways and byways of Lebanon in "Safari" trucks, jeeps and armoured cars, knowing that they are liable to be blown away any minute by Shi'ites, Syrians or Palestinians. They also know that there is no reason or logic to their deployment in Lebanon; but whereas Shi'ite *kamikazes* shrug off death, their sights fixed on the glorious paradise that lies dead, Israeli soldiers get their just desserts in this world. "The nation's concern for its fighting men" knows no bounds! Israeli soldiers stationed in Lebanon are provided with excellent victuals, advantageous conditions, winter gear that would make an alpine mountaineer go green with envy, and a bonanza of entertainment opportunities.

But this "concern" is hardly disinterested. It is part of a deal struck whereby "we'll provide you with the best we have to offer if you go off to Lebanon without asking too many questions." This "concern" is nothing but a sham; it has left its mark on the war, yet pales beside some of the other acts of fraud that have made this war what it is. "We will bring peace unto the Galilee," they say, "and you will foot the bill," (602 dead at last count [now 603 — ed.]).

Their "concern" bears no relation to authentic concern. Upon induction into the army, every recruit pledges to fight until his last breath; Israeli political and military leaders ought to put them to the test only when there is no other alternative. Anything else turns the soldiers into candidates for suicide. And since there was an alternative to the Lebanese War — at least according to the man who launched it — it would seem that the troops have been reduced to nothing more than moving targets. If the Israeli public is really concerned about the welfare of its soldiers, it should stop sending TV and videos to Lebanon and demand that the army get the hell out of there.

"These technological marvels provide them with a means of escape from an intolerable situation."

The current love affair ranging between Israeli soldiers and their videos reveals quite a bit about the road we've travelld. Once upon a time, the army was considered to be the quintessence of all that was good in Israeli society: young and enthusiastic; innovative; willing to take the initiative; chock-full of pioneering spirit — the Israeli army was made up of men willing to sacrifice their own personal interests for the good of the community. Later, as Israeli society began to change, the army came to be viewed as the repository of the country's true spirit in contrast to the disintegration that was underway in Israeli society. This somewhat naive view reveals the Israeli public's inability to come to grips with the collapse of the country's pre-1967 values.

The leaders of the nation wanted to believe that the army was a kind of nature preserve, untouched by the crass materialism and dissolution of values that had overtaken Israeli society. This attitude was eroded in the wake of the 1973 War — a war which exposed the weak spots of the Israeli ruling elite. During the Lebanese War, it collapsed. Nowadays, the army mirrors Israeli society at large; (the air force and navy, not having to rely on reserve manpower, have retained something of the "nature preserve aura" compared to other branches of the armed forces; the same applies to their operational abilities).

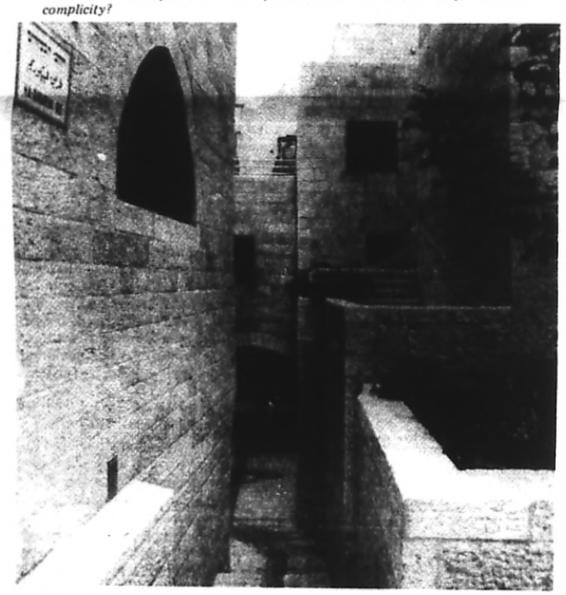
So it is that the initial set of relations that existed between the army and society at large has been revived — but today, negative connotations abound. We must of course be cautious at this point; the true test of any army is on the field of battle. Despite the fact that the army deployed more troops in Lebanon than it did in 1973, the former was not a fullscale war. But even the Lebanese mini-war revealed some of the shortcomings of Israel's military infrastructure: it has come to rely on quantity (rather than quality) to solve problems; also, the careerism of many top officers outweighs their feelings of responsibility to their soldiers.

The above-mentioned developments are part of the unavoidable outcome of the process of growing materialism that has taken root in Israeli society. This process is also discernable in the army. One of the basic tactics employed in the Lebanese War was to flood southern Lebanon with soldiers. It got to the point where it interfered with tactical manoeuvres and blocked the advance of the army (ie on the eastern front during the drive toward the Beirut-Damascus highway).

The flood unleashed in southern Lebanon followed the flood of colour TV and video sets the government let loose on the Israeli public a year before the war; the result in both cases was economic and social preposterousness. The video sets that grace army outposts and bases in Lebanon are telling reminders of the two major phenomena of Israeli society in the early 1980s under the Likud: the "correct economy" and the strategic delusions of "regional order" in the Mideast. (Translation: Davar, November 22, 1984)

'Jewish Quarter' Refugees Recount Controversial Evacuation in 1966

Above: Jerusalem's Jewish Quarter, photographed in 1932, where refugees from Beit Thoul inhabited houses vacated by Jews fleeing Jordanian rule in 1948 – creating Mu'ascar camp. Below: The Jewish Quarter as it is today – totally "redone" to transplant a Jewish presence into the ancient city: *UNRWA complicity?*



When the Jewish state was formed in 1948, disgruntled Palestinians accused Arab regimes, Jordan in particular, of betraying the Palestinian people by capitulating to Zionist ambitions and plans in the region. The same accusation was made following the 1967 Arab-Israeli war in which the rest of Palestine came under Israeli control.

Even though these charges remain nothing more than uncorroborated speculation, one group of Palestinian refugees asserts that the Palestinian cause was indeed betrayed. They charge that the Jordanian government and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) conspired with the Israeli government before 1967 to vacate this group of refugees from their shelters in Jerusalem's Old City to make room for an imminent Israeli takeover.

The refugees, now housed in what is known as Shufat refugee camp, explain the alleged conspiracy thus: in July 1966, 14 representatives from Mu'ascar refugee camp, which was set up from vacant Jewish homes in the Jewish quarter of the Old City after the 1948 war, met with Kathem Abu Ghazaleh, the Jordanian commander of the Jerusalem district. "He informed us that we (the refugees) should leave the Jewish quarter for another camp built by UNRWA in Shufat," about nine kilometres northwest of Jerusalem, one of the 14 told *Al Fajr*. The representatives, speaking on behalf of about 3000 refugees, rejected the transfer after a visit to the new site on the grounds that the new camp was far inferior to their Mu'ascar shelters.

"We visited (Shufat) camp after it was constructed and found it unsuitable for residence," said Omar Yousef Ali, one of two *mukhtars* in the camp. "The rooms were smaller. There was no electricity, no running water, no private toilet facilities, no roads and no shops. Even the shelters did not have kitchen facilities or even space for a kitchen," the *mukhtar* bitterly complained. "We went back to Mu'ascar and called for a meeting with Abu Ghazaleh."

In the meeting, the Jordanian commander reportedly "threatened" the refugees with forceful eviction if they did not leave the Jewish neighbourhood voluntarily.

On July 5, 1966 the Jordanian police and army brought trucks to Mu'ascar in which the refugees and their belongings were loaded and moved to Shufat. Exactly 11 months later, Israel invaded three of its neighbouring Arab countries, taking the West Bank from Jordan, the Golan Heights from Syria and the Sinai from Egypt. Immediately after the Israelis occupied Arab Jerusalem, Jews began reclaiming homes in the Jewish quarter which they had left during the 1948 war. These were the very homes that had comprised Mu'ascar camp and from which the Palestinian refugees had been moved.

The Israeli government began immediate renovation on the quarter in order to emphasise the Jewish character of Jerusalem. Many homes were razed and a plaza built for worship around the Western Wall of the al-Aqsa compound. The Israeli move into the Jewish quarter met with no local opposition since most of the area had been vacated 11 months before.

It was then that the refugees began to suspect a conspiracy. An official UNRWA information sheet, however, on Shufat refugee camp reads: "The camp was constructed in 1965/66 in order to accommodate Palestine Arab refugees who were residing in greatly unsatisfactory shelters at the Mu'ascar Camp in the Old City of Jerusalem."

Refugee Origins

The Mu'ascar camp refugees had come from about 60 different Palestinian villages. They had left their homes during the 1948 war following intense fighting around them between well-armed Jewish organisations and poorly-armed Palestinian revolutionaries backed by a token Arab army under the command of a British army officer.

The majority of the refugees came originally from the village of Beit Thoul, near Abu Ghosh in the Jerusalem district. Beit Thoul was an agrarian village where residents, numbering 800, raised livestock. When the village was occupied by the Jews, most of the residents had already left and were hiding in the mountains, according to the *mukhtar* from Beit Thoul. "We left some of the younger men behind to protect the village. We had some rifles and few bullets. But we were forced to pull out after the Jewish army came to the village with its heavy artillery," the 62-year-old *mukhtar* said.

"We left the village early in 1948. After the Jews entered the village they demolished all the houses, including the village mosque. We left without any of our belongings. We went to Beit Nouba in the Ramallah area and then spread out over the country to wherever we had relatives. We set up camp in the fields because we could not find anywhere else to go. Things were really very bad," he said.

The *mukhtar*, his wife and two children first moved to Mazra'a al-Sharqiya, also in the Ramallah area. They stayed there until the winter of 1949 when they moved to the Jewish quarter in Jerusalem. They moved to Jerusalem after hearing of empty shelters in the Jewish section left behind by Jews who escaped into the Israeli-controlled areas of the city in 1948. The first year was very difficult since the shelters in the Jewish neighbourhood were in bad condition after the war. The refugees had no employment and therefore no money with which to feed themselves and their children. It was then that UNRWA intervened and began supplying them with flour and water. UNRWA then brought the entire area under its control and named the camp Mu'ascar.

The story of the *mukhtar* is typical of the refugees who came to Mu'ascar. Many spoke of similar difficulties they met with during the the first years after the 1948 war. The tragedy was immense and many have bitter memories of these years. Some of the refugees came from the Hebron area from a village near Dawaymeh, which recently received front-page headlines in the Israeli press for a massacre committed there by an armed Israeli militia in 1948. Others came from as far away as the Lydda region.

The story for all was the same. They had left their homes in fear of being killed and all expected to return home soon. They left everything behind. But when the winter came, and no return, they realised the need to begin building new shelters to protect themselves until their promised return became a reality.

In the Jewish quarters they began building new homes. Gradually, they found work in local businesses and some opened their own stores. Being under the auspices of the Jerusalem municipality, they were fortunate to receive water and electricity. The municipality also built roads in the camp and took care of garbage collection. The refugees appeared at long last to be establishing themselves once again.

Shufat Camp

When the refugees heard the news in 1966 of the move to Shufat, they had mixed feelings. Some, who had not prospered since 1948, were pleased at the thought of moving to a new home rent-free. The refugees of Mu'ascar camp had been paying rent to a special department in the Jordanian government responsible for property referred to as "enemy property," meaning the homes left behind by the Jews who fled to Jewish-controlled areas of Jerusalem.

Many of the Mu'ascar residents were not pleased with the move, especially after seeing the new camp. They protested to the Jordanian government and to UNRWA but were forced to comply with the official decision.

In the new Shufat camp, built on land owned by Shufat villagers but actually in an area referred to as Annata, the refugees were forced to begin again. The new homes were too small to accommodate the families and their furniture. A family of seven or less was given a one-room shelter three metres by three metres. A larger family was given a two-room house with each room 2.5 metres by 2.5 metres. All rooms were merely 2.5 metres high.

The shelters had no plumbing, no electricity, no toilets and no kitchen space. There were outside toilets, one for 20 families. Four public water taps were to serve the needs of the entire camp of 500 shelters.

The public water taps and outdoor toilets caused many conflicts among camp residents. The water taps were turned on only two hours a day during which time residents fought long lines at the mains to get their water needs for the whole day. Many had to wait by the taps from the early morning hours in order to get the maximum allowance of 10 gallons. Those who did not come during the two hours the UNRWA representative opened the taps lost their chance at collecting water. As a result, many were forced to begin buying water from outside sources.

Following many refugee protests, UNRWA agreed to supply more water to the camp. The organisation built a few more taps at various areas in the camp but this also was not satisfactory. The residents decided to take matters into their own hands and a special refugees' committee was formed to consider the problem of creating indoor plumbing. The committee collected money from the residents and contracted a local agency to build the improved water system. In the mid-'70s, the indoor plumbing system was completed but not until after a long battle with UNRWA.

Camp leaders charge UNRWA with objecting to improvements in the camp. UNRWA's former Jerusalem director, Entrik Bakrejian, reportedly told refugee representatives that a camp means living in tents like refugees, or else why would it be called a camp. The political argument of maintaining the camps as temporary quarters to symbolise the need for the refugees to return to their original homes is often presented when discussing the Palestine problem. The refugees, however, replied that living like refugees does not necessarily mean living in poverty and subhuman conditions. They told the UNRWA official they needed running water in order to bathe, to clean food and therefore fight disease caused by the dirt. The refugees won the argument and water is now pumped directly to every household in the camp.

The refugees also fought a battle for electricity. UNRWA again refused to help in developing the camp, claiming that it did not have the money. As in the previous case, the refugees collected money from camp residents and paid to extend electricity to every household. In 1972, the camp was illuminated for the first time.

Another controversy erupted, this time over the building of a sewage system for the camp. Since Shufat camp is the only refugee camp within Jerusalem's municipal borders, the Israeli Jerusalem mayor decided to install a sewage system there. Some residents charged, however, that the mayor's decision was not based on their needs but on the needs of a Jewish settlement built in the area.

UNRWA objected once again to the sewage plan, this time because they did not want the Israeli interference in the camp. Residents also objected for the same reason and because they already had plans to build a sewage system at their own expense, like they had with the water and electricity. But UNRWA was eventually convinced by the Jerusalem municipality that the project money was coming from an American philanthropist, not from an Israeli fund. UNRWA agreed despite the residents' objections. The sewage system was completed in 1980. One resident still maintains that the money came through the Jerusalem Foundation, an Israeli governmental organisation which seeks contributions from foreign sources to develop the city.

A conspiracy to "vacate this group of refugees from their shelters in Jerusalem's Old City to make room for an imminent Israeli takeover.

The refugees were given in 1966 a small plot next to their shelters on which they could expand. Many took this opportunity to build extra rooms to accommodate their growing families. They also built private toilet facilities and kitchens. Many expanded by building a second floor onto the homes. As a result the camp took on a crowded look.

Some camp residents were able to make it financially and moved out of the camp to nearby locations where they built homes of their own. UNRWA figures estimate the camp population at 5000 whereas the former residents who built nearby total an additional 5000.

Camp Institutions

The Shufat camp has two schools, one for boys and the other for girls. The schools comprise classes from kindergarten through preparatory level. Only two classrooms have been added to the schools since their establishment in 1966, even though the camp population has doubled since then with 15-year-olds and under making up nearly 50 percent of the camp population. The residents are currently working on forming a parents' association to take care of developing the schools since they charge that UNRWA is doing nothing to improve them. The students have had to go to school in two shifts in order to solve the problem of overcrowding.

The camp also has a youth centre supervised by UNRWA but run solely by camp youths. The centre concentrates on educational and cultural projects like sponsoring lectures and encouraging volunteer work in the camp. There are also boy and girl scout troupes who participate in several activities in Jerusalem, especially during holidays.

In addition to the centre, camp residents saw a need for a charitable organisation. Four years ago residents formed the Shufat Camp Charitable Association and began immediate work on improving life in the camp. The association sponsored sewing classes for camp girls and instigated literacy programmes. It also opened a clinic staffed with one doctor. The clinic opens in the afternoon after the UNRWA clinic closes. One resident said he prefers to go to the association's clinic rather than UNRWA's, which is also staffed with only one doctor, because he says the UNRWA clinic does not pay enough attention to patients. Others did not totally agree.

UNRWA policy is not to speak to the press, therefore *Al Fajr* was unable to get an official response to any of the complaints made by camp residents.

Shufat camp still needs a great deal of work to improve the quality of life of its refugees. There is urgent need for a playground for camp children, who make up nearly half the camp population. Bassem Shehadeh, this year's president of the youth centre, said the centre is planning to build a playground for children but currently has no money. The camp also needs more schools and teachers. But this also requires money and encouragement from the refugees and other Palestinians.

The camp *mukhtar* and other refugees bitterly complain that no local Palestinian delegation has visited them in the camp since 1966 to check on their situation and to assess their needs. They, however, are proud to say that they have been able to improve the camp based on their own efforts and no one else's.

The Jordanian government and UNRWA evacuated refugees from the Mu'ascar camp in Jerusalem's Old City just 11 months before the 1967 war. **Maher AbuKhater** visited the refugees in their current home – Shufat refugee camp – and learned of the circumstances surrounding their second exile 18 years ago and the many hardships camp residents have weathered to improve their living conditions.

Above: Shufat camp where Beit Thoul refugees live now, covered with winter snows. Below: . ding lines at the water pump were a common sight at Shufat until residents gave up in disgust and financed their own water system: *Self-reliance learned the hard way.*

"Water Dogs": The Jordan Valley's Major Fruit Crop

Israeli yearning to possess rich agricultural Palestinian land has led them to employ all means to achieve their end. They have drafted laws and regulations and discouraged farming in order to justify takeover of land. *Al Fajr's* Sami Aboudi looks at the most important agricultural area left to Palestinians – the Jordan Valley – and examines the process involved in cultivating the valley's most important fruit crop – bananas.

Its fertile soil, abundant water and diverse climate make it nearly self-sufficient, able to produce a wide variety of fruits and vegetables.

Several areas of the country are particularly fertile. These include the coast, the northern region and the Jordan Valley.

The Jordan Valley became increasingly important to Palestinian agriculture after Israel's appropriation of the first two areas in 1948. Bordered on the east and west by mountain ranges, the valley extends from lake Tiberis in the north to the Dead Sea in South. The Jordan River runs down the middle, dividing the valley into East and West Banks.

Much of the West Bank's agricultural produce is grown in the Jordan Valley. Seventy three percent of its eggplants, 63 percent of its green peppers, 50 percent of its tomatoes and 15 percent of its citrus come from this region. But by far the most renowned crop in the Valley is the banana.

All of the West Bank's bananas are grown in the Jordan Valley. Ninety three percent of the trees in the area are banana, making it the major fruit crop and the backbone of the valley's economy. Statistics prepared by the Arab-run Jericho Cooperative Association, which specialises in supervising agricultural exports to Jordan, show more than 5500 dunums planted with bananas out of a total 80,000 cultivated dunums.

About 25,000 tons of bananas are produced annually in the West Bank. The bulk of the crop is exported to Jordan via the Allenby bridge, bringing in about JD5 million in hard currency.

The Paz, however, produces larger banana bunches weighing between 40 to 50 kilogrammes each, as opposed to the Cavendish's 30 to 40 kilogrammes. Farmers however argue that with more work, the Cavendish bunch can grow to the same size as the Paza.

Water Dogs

Often called a "water dog" by farmers, the banana is grown mainly in the southern Jordanian Valley region, particularly in al-Ouja, Jericho, al-Nwei'meh, al-Duok and Fasayel. These areas have abundant water springs suitable for banana production. During the past few years, the level of water in these springs has been declining due to the number of new water wells dug in the area by Israeli settlements. Al-Ouja spring, which has an average annual output of 800 cubic metres, is now down to about 400 cubic metres. Unless there is a good rainfall this year, to offset the effect of the Israeli wells as well as an unusually poor rainfall last year, many farmers will be obliged to destroy their plantations and replant only when more water can be obtained.

The introduction of the Israeli technique of drip irrigation revolutionised banana growing. The new system saved a lot of water that had previously been lost in the old open canals system of irrigation from draining or evaporation. Despite its great initial installation expense, Palestinian farmers began using drip irrigation in the mid-1970s; few still use the traditional open canals system. With drip irrigation, the area in cultivation nearly doubled.

Jericho which produces about half of the West Bank's bananas. This includes the cost for seedlings, fertilization, drip irrigation pipes andlabour. An additional JD150 are needed before the plant bears fruit.

The banana's agricultural cycle averages five years. Usually a farmer plants half of his dunums for the five years the crop is producing and, when it must be destroyed, he plants the other half of his land while the nutrient supply is being naturally replenished in the first half.

During the first year, the mother plant produces a small bunch weighing between 12 and 15 kilogrammes. Generally speaking, farmers get back only about half of their investment during the first year.

During the second year, curiously called "the virgin," plants yield an abundant crop of bunches between 40 and 50 kilogrammes. Farmers say the second year is the productive peak of the banana tree's life cycle. The yield diminishes each year thereafter until the tree becomes uneconomical to maintain. Farmers are then urged by cooperative officials to destroy the crop and cultivate the second half of their dunums.

Banana cultivation requires special skills that most Palestinian farmers have gained with experience. Before planting, the land must be ploughed well and fertilized with dung. Agriculture experts say optimal planting time is the month between mid-February and mid-March when temperatures start to rise after the cold winter months.

Seedlings demand careful attention, especially during the first few weeks when constant irrigation is required. Al-Saleh, who has 45 dunums of bananas this year, said that plants require watering at least once every three days. "The banana is often described as a 'water dog' because it could not survive without water," he said.

After cultivating a banana bunch, farmers chop down the branch it grew on in order to allow other plants to grow. They also clip off unnecessary plants to let the sun and air reach young bunches so they will ripen.

Exported to Jordan

Farmers harvest banana bunches once every month before they are ripe so they will not be damaged in transit. The Jordanian government permits half of the West Bank's bananas to be exported to Jordan. Eight marketing merchants – all specialists – monopolize banana trade, according to Jericho farmers. The bananas are first placed in special fermentation stores for ripening, then distributed to street vendors and shops.

Export to Jordan is expensive. Banana merchants say truck owners must obtain a yearly permit at a cost of JD200 from the military government to operate on the bridge. Truckers must purchase another permit at JD30 to 40 for each shipment to Jordan before being allowed to cross the bridge.

Table in Dunums of Banana Plantations in the Jordan Valley Area

Region	1979		1980		1981		1982		1983		1984		total
	Dwarf Cavendish	*Paz*	*Dwarf Cavendish*	*Paz*	*Dwarf Cavendish*	*Paz*	*Dwarf Cavendish*	*Paz*	*Dwarf Cavendish*	*Paz*	*Dwarf Cavendish*	*Paz*	
Jericho	6	14	74	7	455	49	223	74	268	67	519.5	68.5	1825
Al-Duok and Al-Nwei'meh	7	–	22	–	217.5	13.5	194	10	252	15	528	11	1270
Al-Ouja	–	–	152	100	325.5	60.5	256	158	403.5	91.5	474	193	2214
Fasayel	–	–	–	–	–	–	32	–	–	–	40	–	72
Al-Jiftlik	–	–	–	–	24	–	7	–	18	4	121	–	174
Total	13	14	248	107	1022	123	712	242	941.5	177	1682.5	272.5	5555

Source: Jericho Cooperative Association for Marketing Agricultural Products

The banana is relatively new to the Jordan Valley area. Local farmers say that it was first introduced about 70 years ago by a well-known Palestinian farmer, Jawdat al-Halabi, who brought it from Egypt.

Two different brands of banana are grown in the Jordan Valley. The most important is the Dwarf Cavendish – locally known as "baladi" or "Abu Namleh" (father of ant) because of its black spots – which occupies more than 4600 dunums. The second brand, the African Paz – a crossbreed of the large African plant and the Dwarf Cavendish – is planted on less than 1000 dunums. Farmers say that the Dwarf Cavendish needs far less work than the Paz and can survive with smaller quantities of water.

Introduced to the valley only eight years ago, the Paz tree is generally taller than the Dwarf Cavendish. Its four-and-a-half metre height requires support pylons against the wind which occasionally blows through the valley.

Palestinian farmers give priority to the profitable banana crop. Issam, an agricultural engineer who works with banana farmers, says that banana prices are always stable. "They never go below JD180 per ton," he said. Sometimes, prices rise above JD280 per ton. One planted dunum generally yields about five tons of bananas.

Production Costly

This type of farming, however, is expensive. Planting a banana field requires a larger capital investment, and farmers must be able to absorb losses during the first year before the fields start yielding crops. Only a few farmers are able to afford such investment, so these farmers virtually monopolize the market. Farmers spend more than JD300 to plant one dunum of land, explained Mahmoud Ibrahim al-Saleh, 40, who comes from al-Ouja, a village north of

Feudalism

The Jordan Valley area operates on a semi-feudal "sharing system" which suits both farmers and landowners. Landless farmers, mainly refugees from 1948 or farmers whose land was confiscated by the Israelis, work fields owned by big land-owning families in exchange for half the crop. Farmers say they also share the cost of fertilizers and pesticides.

Farmers usually employ their families to manage banana plantations during the regular season between planting and harvesting. For planting and cultivation, both of which require hard work, farm workers from neighbouring villages are hired. These workers say they receive adequate wages for their labour.

Palestine and Culture

Homecoming

by E. D. Karampetsos

The soldier's billy club barely missed his fingertips. At the last second he had flinched and pulled his outstretched hand to his side. The soldier standing behind him gave him a stinging whack on the back of the head. He was going to have to put his hand out or be beaten.

Only minutes before he had been standing in the little store at the foot of the hill listening to its owner. "I get scared when the students demonstrate. I'd close the store, but the soldiers would accuse me of participating in the protest and shut me down once and for all. So I just watch them sitting on their jeeps in front of the Post Office. When they come here they talk to me with the barrels of their guns aimed at my head. I just tell them I'm only a businessman. I don't want any trouble. What else can I tell them?"

The store owner's story was so familiar here that it was a cliche. If it hadn't been the repetition of so much suffering and oppression it would have been banal. "I came back five years ago to get married. The soldiers came to the house and arrested me the night before my wedding. They accused me of being a terrorist and kept beating me up. I'd never been treated that way before. What did I know about terrorists? I left Palestine when I was 19. My uncle in Brooklyn has a restaurant. Since he's getting old and doesn't have any children, he invited me to America to help him run his place. I came back to get married because I'd saved a little money. My mother got sick while I was in prison and now I have to take care of her too. I got married six months later when they let me out of prison. I've never seen people worse than these. That's why I decided to stay. I could be an American citizen by now and have lots of money instead of this shop. And I'll be here when they leave."

It would have been so easy to get rich in America and forget. He had heard the same arguments as the little shopkeeper. "Be reasonable. With your education you can do anything you want in this country. Look at these ads." Mr. Rizek opened the "Want Ad" section of the Sunday paper. "Look here, 'starting salary for qualified applicant US$22,000.' And there, 'Qualified applicant automatically enrolled in comprehensive health and retirement plan. Wages best in industry.' In a few years you'll have everything you need. A house in the country. A new car. A boat. Whatever you want." And Sally, too. Of course, Mr. Rizek had left that out. What he wanted most of all was to see his daughter married to this young man with the promising future.

Sally. They called her Salwa at home, but outside she used her American name. And she was as American as her name. "Politics bore me," she would say when she became impatient with his attempts to talk about the homeland. If he complained about the land that had been confiscated to build yet another settlement, or if he tried to mention something about the oppression, like the time they blew up the Said house

"IT WOULD HAVE BEEN SO EASY TO GET RICH IN AMERICA AND FORGET..."

"for harboring terrorists," Sally would sigh, "It's terrible what some people do." Then she would remain silent waiting for him to change the subject. She understood what was happening, what it was that always made him uncomfortable in America and so guilty about being away.

There was something about his assimilated countrymen, like Sally and her father. In some ways they kept their ties with their origins. They made frequent visits; even the poorest managed to get back from time to time. Their homes were decorated with handiwork from their villages. The framed embroidery. Bright orange, yellow and green threads on heavy black cloth. The large reed fruit basket sheathed in leather sitting on the coffee table. In the hallway there were three large pots covered with geometric designs. Sally and her cousins had carried the heavy urns on their laps during the flight home just to make sure they weren't damaged. Mr. Rizek was proud of the "artistic" canvas hanging over his fireplace. He'd given a photograph of his village home to an artist who reproduced it in brilliant acryllics. "And the old man in the chair, that's my father. Cost me US$400! Beautiful work!"

But behind all this superficial nostalgia and ethnic pride there was a wall. Somewhere in their hearts and their minds they had erected walls whose existence even they denied. They were thick, full of an insulating material that closed them off from the deprivation the oppression, the suffering of their brothers and sisters, their parents and relatives.

How easy it would be to construct a wall of his own. The arguments were all there. "It's crazy to want to go back. If they don't get you, our people will. You're going to help our people by teaching at the university. 'Someday it'll be a national university,' you say. Don't be a fool. They'll use you and discard you when they're through with you. Do you think anybody will be grateful? No matter who runs our country, a few powerful families will have all the privileges." How easy it would have been to give up and agree. The problem was that secretly he agreed and was afraid. It had been so easy in America. "You do a day's work and they pay you for a day's work. They reward their people here. Over there you're like a prisoner working on a rock pile."

Walking up the hill to the campus, he smelled the teargas in the air. It was quiet everywhere except for the sound of a small group of students breaking up a barricade and throwing the rocks to the side of the road. They were being watched by three soldiers in riot gear. He reached into his pocket and pulled out his blue American passport. He handed it to one of the soldiers. "I'm a teacher here. I came up to see if I can help. If somebody is hurt maybe I could give first aid."

"You bastard," said the soldier. "Help here. Pick up the rocks."

He felt himself trembling. His entire body had suddenly been filled with chills. It was impossible to distinguish which was stronger, his fear or his disgust. He picked up stones with the others.

When they finished, the soldiers made them line up next to the road and ordered them to hold out their right hands with the palms turned upward. Then one of the soldiers hit each student on the hand with all his strength. When he hit a student nearby, the boy's watch fell smashed from his wrist.

"Pick it up," said the soldier.

The student hesitated. "It's broken." He didn't move. And then the three soldiers started hitting him until he fell to the ground.

He was last. What he had waited for for so long was finally going to happen. It was so easy to be timid. To avoid what frightened him. But he had taken his time in joining the fight, like the swimmer easing his way into the cold water for his first swim of the season.

"Don't be frightened of the water. Just stay next to me like this and roll with the waves. Don't be frightened of the waves." Leila taught him to swim long distances without tiring. How to love the sea and not fear it. "You're 25 and act like a child around water." There was no place to swim in his mountain village. He'd learned a few basic strokes in the university swimming pool during his freshman year. There the water was calm and there were lifeguards to save him. The Mediterranean was so alive. It was terrifying. But he followed Leila into the water. He didn't dare show his fear. He followed her eyes. He watched her long, wavy black hair as it spread out on the water. Like a Siren, she drew him out into the water.

Leila's brother, Hafid, had been his roommate during their senior year. A few days before commencement Hafid invited him to spend a month at his family home in Tunis. "Go home a month later. What difference will it make? Tunis is so beautiful. You'll never regret it."

Leila was beautiful. She was 19 now, nothing like the little girl in the snapshot Hafid carried in his wallet. The summer sun, the sand, warm nights with huge orange moons and Leila. She taught him to love the water and he fell in love with her. Near the end of his stay, when they were alone for a moment, he leaned over and kissed her on the eyes. She looked at him and smiled. "Don't fall in love with me. I'm not ready. And you have a long way to go."

The next day he went swimming alone. Without Leila he swam out as far as he felt he could go. He pushed

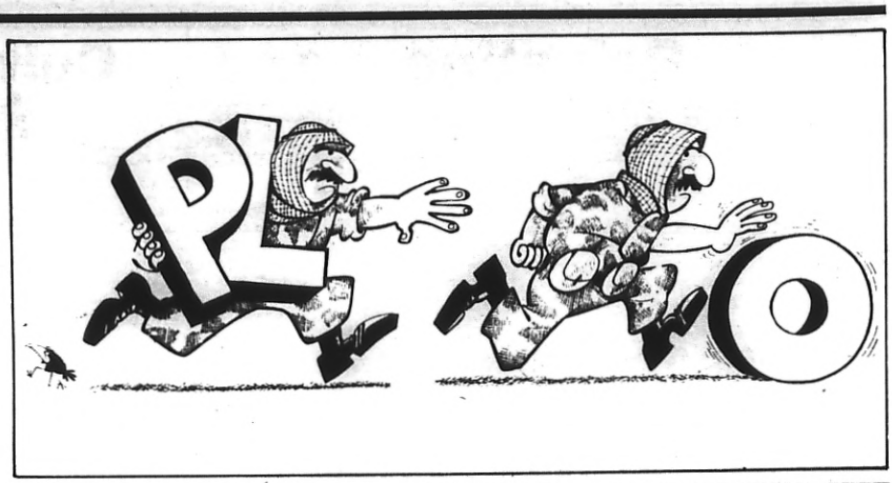
"...OVER HERE YOU'RE LIKE A PRISONER WORKING ON A ROCK PILE."

himself to the limit and then slowly made his way back to the sandy shore of Gammarth. Too tired to make his way through the water, he let it carry him and before he knew it, he was being forced onto sharp rocks a few yards from the beach. Each time he touched the stones they cut him. They cut him everywhere. He tried to swim back out to sea so he could go around the sharp stones, but he was too weak and the current too strong. He kept getting pushed against the stones and trying to escape until he was finally too exhausted to fight anymore. A large wave tossed him onto the rocks and then withdrew leaving him on them. He grasped them with his hands even though they were cutting him and slowly crawled and pulled his body onto the sand.

Now he extended his hand again.

Translated from Al Fajr al-Adabi, *November issue,* Homecoming *was written in 1980 by E.D. Karampetsos. Karampetsos is a former professor of drama and literary criticism at Bir Zeit University. He is currently teaching in Saudi Arabia.*

WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS



The conclusion of the PNC, King Hussein s visit to Egypt and the continued provocations by Rabbi Levinger against Dheisheh camp were the main stories covered by the local press this week.

Palestinian newspapers gave detailed coverage to the conclusion of the 17th PNC session and the election of the new executive committee.

King Hussein's visit to Egypt and the speeches by Hussein and Hosni Mubarak at the People's Assembly were given prominence. The demonstrations by anti-occupation Israelis to protest the month-long sit-in by settler militant Rabbi Levinger outside Dheisheh refugee camp were also given top coverge.

National Dialogue Status

Abu Iyad's call for a PNC committee to take part in the Palestinian comprehensive dialogue between Fatah and the Democratic Alliance was a clear sign of the concern of the Palestinian leadership, Fatah in particular, with continuing the dialogue for national unity.

This call may remove any ambiguity and suspicion that surrounded this PNC session. Beside putting an end to the claims of those who still talk about "deviation, and rightist control and individuality in taking decisions," the call asserts the keenness of the PLO on preventing any division and on tackling all problems openly and frankly.

We assert that the Palestinian scene will witness a high level dialogue. We insist on such a dialogue so that we may reach a unified stand.

AL FAJR
November 29

After the PNC?

With the conclusion of the PNC meetings, a new stage of action begins in the Palestinian arena. If the convening of the council was an assertion of the perpetual nature of the PLO and of the strength of the legitimate institutions, the next stage means action, effectiveness and activation of those institutions.

The PNC resolutions provided the political and organizational ground for the activation of these institutions. This ground is governed by the Palestinian position sticking to the right of the Palestinian people to return, to self-determination and to an independent state. It also rejects all resolutions and projects such as UN Resolution 242, Camp David and the Reagan Plan. This rejection belies the claims of those who alleged that the PLO is going to make concessions.

The most prominent task of the post-PNC stage is to strengthen national unity. There are sure signs that the PLO is very keen on this point. The statements issued by Fatah leaders and the leaders of the Democratic Alliance factions all showed interest in continuing national dialogue to achieve and bolster national unity.

AL SHA'AB
November 30

Dialogue Desired

A few hours after the conclusion of the PNC meetings, Yasir Arafat asserted that efforts should be made to resume Palestinian dialogue.

This statement provides a suitable key to the resolutions of the PNC. The national Palestinian unity was the most important topic, and clearly defined as a Palestinian national unity with an independent will. The unity is to be among those factions that signed the Aden-Algiers agreement and refused to be dominated by anyone. The PNC resolutions refuted the claims that there will be concessions at the expense of national rights.

The PNC convening and the resolutions passed give momentum to the Palestinian march.

AL SHA'AB
December 1

National Unity

The convening of the PNC in Amman and its resolutions emphasize the victory of the Palestinian will and independent decision. With the success of the session, our people have overcome a difficult experience through which they proved their ability to continue the march and its adherence to national rights, at the top of which are the rights to return and to self-determination.

The stage that preceded the PNC convening was difficult. But the next stage is no less difficult. And the task that lies ahead of Abu Ammar is no less serious than what it was prior to the convening of the PNC. Most important now is national unity, with the Democratic Alliance in particular.

We say this while we realize the tremendous efforts expended to achieve this unity, and we realize also who is to blame for not achieving unity.

The speeches at the PNC and the PNC resolutions emphasize not only national unity; but urge others to seek it.

These attitudes were not the result of weakness or narrow interest. They stem from deep conviction that only all citizens loyal to Palestine should meet and join efforts.

If this is true about Palestinians outside it is more true about Palestinians in the occupied territories. If there is one reason for difference, there are a million ones urging us to unite.

No doubt, the past few weeks were full of tension. It was a rich experience that taught and should teach us that we all are in one boat where there is no room for fighting even with rhetoric. Let's all start to work for national unity.

AL FAJR
December 1

The Arab Movement

King Hussein and Hosni Mubarak's speeches yesterday before the People's Assembly reflect the determination of both sides to find a just solution to the Palestinian problem. President Mubarak made it clear that Egypt's interest in the cause has never diminished and that Egypt's readiness to exert efforts and offer sacrifices has never ceased.

King Hussein's visit, in itself, is considered as strengthening the bilateral relations between the two countries.

The strengthening of relations between Jordan and Egypt comes within the context of solidarity and clearing the atmosphere at a time when inter-Arab relations have reached the lowest point.

This gloomy Arab situation led to the political stalemate and the inability of the Arab nation to get out of the crisis and problems resulting from the split. The enemies of Arab rights seized this opportunity to hold onto their gains and try to get new gains in the absence of a minimum of Arab unity and accord.

We bless any Arab meeting that aims at putting an end to the suffering of the Palestinian people and ridding it of occupation. If the Arab leaders do not meet when they differ, when can they meet? And if the Israeli practices in the occupied territories are not sufficient cause to convene an Arab summit, then for what reasons can such a summit be convened if ever it will convene?

We hope that the Hussein-Mubarak meeting will be the start of a movement in which the PLO participates in order to achieve the goals and fulfill the aspirations of the Palestinian people.

AL QUDS
December 3

Firm Convictions

In a political-economic analysis published by *Ha'aretz* three days ago, there are very clever references linking the deteriorating economic crisis in Israel with the political settlement projects in the area.

The writer of the analysis stressed that Israel would have to give in to what he called "concessions" regarding much of what it rejects now. Israel would do that as long as it rejects peace intiatives.

This Israeli analysis corresponds with an Arab traditional analysis prevailing in the area. The Arab analysis asserts that the successive economic crises in Israel would force it to withdraw from the occupied territories, and to respond to its economic needs in return for giving up the costly settlement policy.

But we see that both analyses are not true. The current economic crisis in Israel was not felt in the Israeli street during the last elections. It only stepped up the phenomenon of extremism as represented by Kahane's election to the Knesset. So, the gist of the economic-political analysis was dropped. It became clear that the opposite is true. The worse the economic crisis in Israel, the more extremist it becomes.

Perhaps the US, as the major supplier of Israel, is aware of this Israeli equation.

The conviction of reaching a political settlement to this entangled conflict lies in the dedication of Israel itself to this settlement policy and the extent of any US efforts.

As long as Israel remains confident that the Arab states are not interested in imposing this settlement and the US administration is not convinced of it, Israel will persist in its current convenient stand.

Hence, the PNC recent resolutions were designed to remove the stalemate. Let the PLO move all over the world to confirm the deep conviction in the inevitability of a just and comprehensive solution, that includes the Palestinian rights and the security and stability of the peoples in the region.

AL FAJR
December 4

AAUG Convenes 17th Annual Conference

The Association of Arab American University Graduates (AAUG) concluded its four-day, 17th annual convention in Detroit November 13. Under the theme "Arab Nationalism: Fight for Survival," Arab intellectuals living in North America as well as parts of the Arab world gave presentations to the 500 members. A number of invited guests from abroad did not attend, in protest of harassment or refusals by US officials to grant visas.

Mohammed Shadid, professor of political science at Najah University in Nablus and a panelist at the conference, told *Al Fajr* he felt the convention was a success. "As far as theoretically looking at problems facing the Arab world and honestly criticising them, I believe that the convention dealt seriously with these questions," he said.

The several conference panels dealt with a variety of subjects, concentrating on Arab nationalism and the external and internal forces causing the disintegration of the Arab world.

Main speakers in the convention included Palestinian intellectual Edward Said, Lebanese Bishop George Khodor, and Inam Ra'ad, former chairperson of the Lebanese National Movement and head of the Syrian Nationalist Party. A statement from PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat was read by Salah Tamari, ex-Ansar prisoner and lieutenant colonel in Fatah.

Internationally popular progressive Lebanese singer Marcel Khalifeh was not granted a visa by the American Embassy in Beirut to make the trip. Two Egyptian opposition leaders refused to attend after they were subjected to harassment and extensive interrogation by US Embassy officials in Cairo. Khaled Mohieddine, head of the Egyptian Progressive Unity Party and editor of *Al Ahali* Egyptian weekly, sought a US visa on his diplomatic passport through the Egyptian ministry of foreign affairs. According to an AAUG statement, Mohieddine was subjected to interrogation by embassy staff that went far beyond customary visa application questions. Ahmad Baha-eddine, a leading Egyptian intellectual and newspaper columnist, was similarly harassed.

Although the State Department finally approved the applications, both men rejected the visas because they considered that the US Embassy's treatment of their applications constituted a humiliation for Egypt. Commenting on the episode, AAUG President Abbas Alnasrawi noted, "It is clear that no matter how cooperative Arab governments are with the US, the US continues to treat them as third-class allies."

AAUG members elected Dr Hani Faris, a professor at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, as their new president.

PNC Resolutions

continued from page 1

the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, (DFLP), the Palestinian Communist Party (PCP) and the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF).

The new executive committee has three deportees from the occupied West bank: Hebron Mayor Fahd Qawasmi, Halhoul Mayor Mohammed Milhem — the only official members of the PNC from the 180 unnamed members representing the occupied territories — and Bishop Elias Khouri of Ramallah.

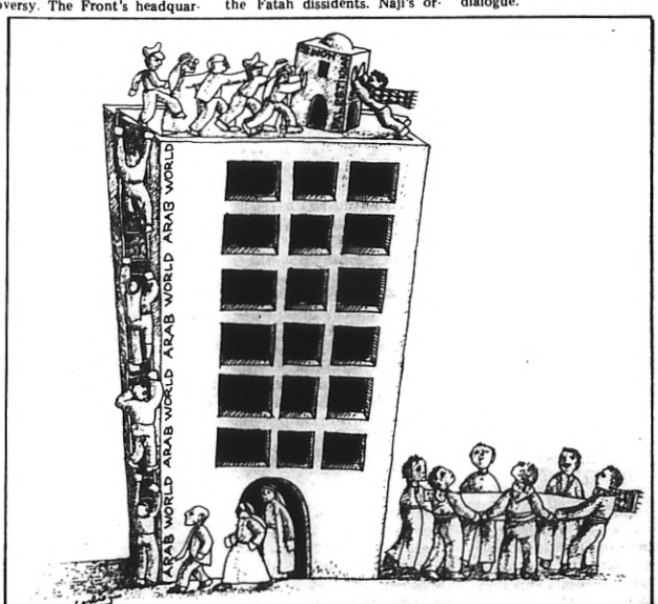
For the first time, a military commander of the Palestine Liberation Army, (PLA) Jordanian branch, is on the committee. The appointment of Mohammed Abbas (Abu Abbas) in the slot for the PLF created some controversy. The Front's headquarters in Damascus issued a statement denying that Abbas represented it and its members who attended the PNC meetings in Amman have been dismissed from their organisation. The PLF is a party to the Democratic Alliance which boycotted the PNC session.

The PLA's representative, Abd al-Razzaq al-Yehiya, is the commander of the Palestinian regular army stationed in Jordan. The sixth new member is Jawid al-Ghusein, an independent, who will also head the Palestine National Fund.

Two members of the former executive committee, Abd al-Muhsin Abu Meizer, former spokesman for the PLO, and Tala Naji, PFLP-General Command, had their membership suspended because of their role in the intra-Palestinian fighting. Abu Meizer, who was an independent, came out in support of the Fatah dissidents. Naji's organisation actively participated in the Tripoli fighting. Other members who left the executive committee are independents Muhammad Zuhdi Nashashibi, Ahmad Sidqi Dajani, Hanna Nasser and Hamid Abu Sitteh.

In the first working session of the new executive committee in Amman December 1, the committee decided to move all PLO institutions out of Damascus. The headquarters of the PNC will be moved to Amman; the residence of its new speaker Sheikh Abd al-Hamid al-Sayeh, the offices of the Palestine National Fund and the PNC's secretariat are to be moved to Tunisia.

The committee also agreed to send delegates to Arab and foreign capitals to brief them on the decisions of the 17th session. It also decided, in the six-hour meeting, to form a special committee for Palestinian national dialogue.



"THE SAVING NET OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION TALKS"

December 8 and 9

THEATRE — *The Immigrants*, presented by the Theatre Arts Company of Jerusalem. El-Hakawati Theatre, East Jerusalem, 7:00 pm.

December 13

FILM — *High Anxiety*, by Mel Brooks. El-Hakawati Theatre, East Jerusalem. 7:00 pm.

Hussein

continued from page 2

for incorporating the PLO in their joint strategy. Egyptian Premier Kamal Hassan Ali said in a press conference in Cairo December 4, at the conclusion of Hussein's visit, that the two sides have agreed to continue consultations "but there is a third partner, and that is the PLO, who did not give any opinion on what kind of solution should be promoted (for the Middle East problem.)" The joint communique did not include a call for the establishment of an independent state as customary. Instead they affirmed the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

The PLO did not give any official position on the Jordanian-Egyptian proposals. Political observers in Cairo, however, said that the PLO followed the talks closely. The secretary of the new PLO Executive Committee, which was elected during the Amman PNC session, Jamal al-Surani, was in Cairo for Hussein's visit.

PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat, on the other side, told reporters before leaving Riyadh on an official visit to Kuwait December 4 that King Hussein's call for an international conference was one of the principle resolutions of the PNC session. "With this, we agree with King Hussein," he added.

The call by Jordan and Egypt for an international conference was immediately rejected by both Israel and the US. Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, in reply to the joint Jordanian-Egyptian proposals before the Israeli Knesset, ignored the call for an international conference. He renewed his invitation to King Hussein to start negotiations without any prior conditions. Peres also said that Israel was ready to talk to a Jordanian-Palestinian negotiating team provided that no PLO members participate in the negotiations. He also affirmed Israel's refusal to recognise the PLO.

Likewise, the US was unenthusiastic to the joint Jordanian-Egyptian agreement. US State Department spokesperson Alan Romberg said, "We do not believe that such a conference would produce any positive results." Romberg added that the US thinks that direct negotiations based on the Camp David agreement "represent a more practical course."

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WEEKLY REVIEW

November 28, 1984

CURFEW ON NABLUS OLD CITY LIFTED

NABLUS — A curfew imposed on the Old City of Nablus was lifted.The curfew was imposed following a violent clash between Palestinian demonstrators in support of the PNC and Israeli soldiers. One youth was seriously wounded in the clash when soldiers fired live ammunition into the crowd.

ISRAELI BUS AMBUSHED

BETHLEHEM — An Israeli bus carrying Jewish settlers came under automatic gunfire as it was passing by the Tomb of Rachel in Bethlehem.

Large Israeli forces cordoned off the area and detained several residents for questioning.

MERCHANTS ASKED TO REPORT TO POLICE IN NABLUS

NABLUS — Israeli policemen in Nablus seized the identity cards of dozens of local merchants, ordering them to report to the police station for questioning on the November 27 incident in the city during which a youth was shot by Israeli soldiers in a demonstration.

DHEISHEH YOUTHS GO ON TRIAL

NABLUS — The Israeli military court in Nablus began hearing the case of three youths from the Dheisheh refugee camp charged with confronting a group of Jewish settlers who raided the camp earlier this month.

The three are: Adnan Atiyeh, Talal Shehadeh and Mohammed al-Qassas.

UNIONIST SENTENCED

Israeli authorities detained unionist Imad al-Labadi and sentenced him to one month in prison on charges of violating a town arrest.

DHEISHEH RESIDENT RELEASED ON BAIL

NABLUS — The military court in Nablus decided to release Tariq al-Laham of Dheisheh camp on IS400,000 bail.

Laham was detained for 60 days at Fara'a prison on charges of confronting Meir Kahane and his followers when they attempted to raid the camp last month.

FIVE YOUTHS JAILED, FINED

AROUB — Five young men from Aroub refugee camp near Hebron were sentenced to six months' imprisonment, one year suspended and a IS75,000 fine by the Nablus military court on charges of stone-throwing.

The five are: Ahmed Abdel Karim Muheisen, Hassan Mohammed al-Jawabreh, Nasser Abdel Rahman al-Jawabreh, Abdel Fatah Mukbel and Ibrahim Mahmoud al-Jawabreh.

YOUTHS GO ON TRIAL

TULKARM — Ahmed Said Khouli, Zakariya Abu Miriam and Nasser Oafeh, all from Tulkarm refugee camp, are to stand trial on charges of hurling molotov cocktails at Israeli cars and burning tyres.

The three were detained following a pro-PNC demonstration in the camp.

November 29, 1984

FRENCH ACADEMICIANS CALL FOR RELEASE OF BZU STUDENT

Twenty-five French academicians sent a telegramme to Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin and the Ramallah military governor calling for the immediate release of Bir Zeit University student Nasser Abdel Jawad who was detained recently by the authorities.

FOUR JENIN YOUTHS FINED

JENIN — The Israeli military court in Jenin fined the following: Ahmed Afif Zakarneh, Hakam Mousa al-Mahmoud, Wafa Mar'i and Imad Anzawi. They were charged with ignoring the military governor's summons to them.

RESIDENT RELEASED AND ANOTHER'S CASE HEARING POSTPONED

JALAZON — Israeli authorities released Ramadan Ibrahim Rashid from Jalazon refugee camp after a detention of 25 days at Fara'a prison.

The Israeli court in Nablus postponed the hearing on the case of Khaled Mousa ar-Riyahi until December 27. He is charged with throwing stones at Israeli cars.

Israeli authorities arrested two Jalazon men for throwing stones at Israeli patrols.

November 30, 1984

NABLUS DOCTOR IMPRISONED

JENIN — Israeli military court in Jenin sentenced Dr Basim al-Kadi from the village of Orta near Nablus to five months in prison and 13 months suspended on charges of membership in an illegal organisation.

LINES OF ANNEXATION — Israel's government-owned electric company connected the West Bank town of Jenin to the Israeli grid this week. The extension of Israeli lines, replacing local Palestinian-controlled generators, has been forced on many West Bank and Gaza towns and villages over the protests of residents, who regard the "service" as another step toward annexing the occupied territories.

SAMU' RESIDENT FINED FOR STONE-THROWING

HEBRON — Israeli military court in Hebron sentenced Mohammed Hassan Hamdan Abu al-Mazil from the village of Samu' near Hebron to three years suspended and a IS150,000 fine on charges of throwing stones at Israeli vehicles.

STUDENT JAILED, ANOTHER CHARGED

LYDDA — Military court in Lydda sentenced student Bassem Fawzi Jarban from the village of Jisr al-Zarka'a in the Haifa district to one year in prison and two years suspended on charges of membership in an illegal organisation and distributing pamphlets in Rome where he was studying.

He was detained last September.

A charge sheet has been submitted to military court in Lydda against student Fakhri Abu Leil from the village of Ain Mahel in the Nazareth district on charges of membership in an illegal organisation.

Fakhri is a fifth-year student studying in Italy.

CURFEW IN NABLUS

NABLUS — Israeli troops imposed a curfew on parts of the Nablus centre and old city after youths hurled stones at soldiers.

BETHLEHEM MERCHANTS QUESTIONED

BETHLEHEM — Israeli authorities questioned a number of merchants from Bethlehem about slogans written on the town's walls. The merchants were released late at night after their identity cards were confiscated by the authorities.

PRISONER KILLED FOR COLLABORATING

GAZA — Ibrahim Mohammed Akkad, 30, a prisoner at Gaza prison, was killed by political prisoners who suspected him of collaborating with the authorities.

December 1, 1984

BOMB FOUND AT MUKHTAR'S HOUSE

BEIT SAFAFA — A bomb was found in front of the house of the *mukhtar* of Beit Safafa near Jerusalem. Bomb disposal experts safely defused the bomb, which turned out to be of Israeli army make. Police are investigating.

December 2, 1984

NEW SETTLEMENT IN GAZA STRIP

GAZA — The Israeli ministerial committee for settlement has decided to establish a new settlement in the Gaza Strip. It will be called 'Kfar Dayagim' (the fishermen's village).

SHUYOUKH AND AROUB LAND CONFISCATED

HEBRON — Israeli authorities in Hebron notified landowners in Shuyoukh and Aroub villages that 1500 dunums of their land would be expropriated as 'state land.' The land in question is Alqinniyeh, Khallat Ash-Shuyoukh, Ar-Rahwah, Wadi al-Dour and Jad Dalabah. The landowners intend to take the case to court.

HEBRON RESIDENT RELEASED

RAMALLAH — Israeli military court in Ramallah ordered the release of Abdel Fattah al-Haymouni from Hebron. He was acquitted of the charge of throwing stones and assaulting a policeman to snatch his weapon. He was detained for several months.

SAMU' RESIDENTS FINED

RAMALLAH — Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Ahmed Mohammed Abu Seif and Khaled Abu Awwad, both from Samu' village near Hebron, to three years suspended. Each was fined IS100,000 for throwing stones.

COURT TURNS DOWN REQUEST TO RELEASE YOUTH

RAMALLAH — Israeli military court in Ramallah rejected a request by advocate Jawad Boulus to release Mohammed Ahmad Bashir, from the village of Jinsafout near Nablus, on bail.

Bashir was arrested 10 months ago on charges of inciting to murder a collaborator.

December 3, 1984

ARBITRARY DISCHARGE OF ARAB WORKERS

Israeli factories and companies continue to discharge scores of Arab workers arbitrarily. An Israeli company dismissed five Arab workers recently under the pretext that they were late to work. Other companies are provoking Arab workers to force them to resign.

An Israeli company dismissed some Arab workers from Nabi Saleh village in the Ramallah district because they attended the funeral of Bakr Abdullah who was killed by Israeli soldiers last week.

DR NAMURAH IS RELEASED

HEBRON — Israeli authorities released Dr. Abdel Rahim Musbah al-Namurah, deputy director of Alia Hospital in Hebron. He was sentenced by a military court to two months in prison, three years suspended and a IS3 million fine on 'security charges.'

GAZA STRIP LACKS MEDICINE

GAZA — Patients in the Gaza Strip are complaining of a severe shortage of pharmaceuticals in the local clinics and hospitals. They say that even aspirin cannot be found in the pharmacies.

BETHLEHEM AND RAMALLAH RESIDENTS SENTENCED TO JAIL

RAMALLAH — The Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced 50-year-old Hasan Shakarneh, from Nahalin village near Bethlehem, to two months in prison and 22 months suspendd. He was charged with finding three bombs in 1967 and concealing them.

The Ramallah court set December 31 as the date to consider the case of Jamal Hussein Chayyadah from Nahalin. He is charged with failing to report weapons left by the Jordanian army.

The Ramallah court also sentenced Michel Barghouti to two months in prison and 10 months suspended for membership in an illegal organisation.

WEST BANKERS SENTENCED TO VARIOUS JAIL TERMS

The Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced the following West Bankers: Omar Ibrahim Qarrajah to four months in prison and 32 months suspended for helping throw a bomb at an Israeli patrol; and Abdel Naser Saleh Shalon, from Aqbat Jabr, to four years in prison and four years suspended for membership in an illegal organisation, for tossing petrol bombs at an Israeli police station and for possession of weapons.

The Nablus military court sentenced Issa Zaki Salhiyeh from al-Amari camp to nine days in prison and seven months suspended for participation in a Land Day demonstration. He was also fined IS40,000.

The Nablus court sentenced Riyadh Abu Salha from Abu Dis to nine days in prison and three-and-a-half months suspended for demonstrating. It also sentenced Mohammed Jamal al-Diesi from Jenin to eight days in prison and five-and-a-half months suspended for participation in a demonstration.

DHEISHEH YOUTH FINED

RAMALLAH — The Ramallah military court sentenced Ra'ed Mohammed of Dheisheh refugee camp to a IS100,000 fine on charges of demonstrating.

JENIN YOUTH JAILED FOR PETROL BOMB

NABLUS — Subhi Mohammed Shinawi of Jenin was sentenced to one year in prison and three-and-a-half years suspended by the Nablus military court on charges of throwing a petrol bomb.

December 4, 1984

MILITARY VEHICLE STONED

AMARI — An Israeli military vehicle was pelted with stones as it passed through the al-Amari refugee camp outside Ramallah. Soldiers opened fire at the rock-throwers, but no injuries were reported.

ARAB WOMAN ARRESTED FOR PLANTING BOMB

NETANYA — An Arab woman was arrested by Israeli police on suspicion of planting a large bomb in Netanya, the Israeli newspaper *Hadashot* reported.

It did not reveal the identity of the woman, but said she was 25 years old and had been seen walking in the main shopping centre in Netanya shortly before the bomb was discovered.

The paper quoted eyewitnesses as saying the woman was carrying a number of items and that some people had helped her pick them up when she dropped them. They said they now believe that one of the items was a bomb which the woman left behind.

GAZA YOUTH DETAINED FOR ATTACK ON ISRAELI DRIVER

GAZA — An Arab youth from Gaza was detained by Israeli police on charges of stabbing an Israeli driver in the northern Galilee three days ago. The driver was seriously wounded and his car set on fire.

PEACE CENTRE BRIEFED ON PALESTINIAN DEVELOPMENTS

JERUSALEM — The International Centre for Peace in the Middle East held its annual meeting in the American Colony Hotel in East Jerusalem.

The meeting was attended by some local figures from the occupied territories who briefed the Jewish members from Europe and America on the outcome of the Palestine National Council's 17th session. They also reviewed the local and international Palestinian situation in general.

4 YOUTHS SENTENCED FOR MEMBERSHIP

RAMALLAH — The Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Wa'el Ibrahim Abu Ne'meh and Ali Mohammed Jaful, both from Abu Dis in Jerusalem, to two-and-a-half years in prison and two-and-a-half years suspended on charges of membership in an illegal organisation, volunteering to fight in the 1982 Israeli-Palestinian war and training in weapons. The two are students at the Jordanian al-Yarmuk University.

The court also sentenced brothers Khaled and Ali Ibrahim, from Aqbat Jabr camp to four years in prison and four years suspended on charges of membership in an illegal organisation and possession of explosives.

RESIDENTS JAILED

RAMALLAH — Abdel Hamid al-Aramin, a resident from the village of Sa'ir in the Hebron district, was sentenced to 50 days in prison by the Ramallah military court on charges of receiving money from a PLO office in Amman.

The court also sentenced 60-year-old Mohammed Yousef al-Asi, from the village of Beit Likya near Ramallah, to 28 days in prison and 11 months suspended on charges of possessing an Israeli-made automatic machine gun and five hand grenades.

7 JABALYA YOUTHS JAILED

GAZA — Seven young men from Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip were sentenced to prison by the Gaza military court on charges of membership in an illegal organisation. Three were also charged with distributing leaflets and four with producing explosives.

The seven are: Mohammed Dib Tamideh, 22, to two-and-a-half years in prison and two-and-a-half years suspended; Said Mahmoud al-Eileh, 22, to two-and-a-half years in prison and two-and-a-half-years suspended; Samir Ali Ahmad Azam, 20, to one-and-a-half years in prison and two years suspended; Fares Kamal Abu Sultan, 16, to 28 months in prison and 24 months suspended; Zuhair Ahmad Abu Ashour, 19, to 28 months in prison and 24 months suspended; Ramadan Khalil Shehadeh Balbisis, 17 to 16 months in prison and 24 months suspended; and Fawaz Kamal Washah, 18, to four months in prison, 18 months suspended and a IS50,000 fine.

RAID ON NABLUS SHOPS

NABLUS — Israeli customs officials raided a number of shops in Nablus and confiscated goods worth tens of thousands of dollars on the pretext that the merchants had not paid taxes.

After the PNC

continued from page 5

unity. What do our people choose, what do our factions choose? Are we going to travel the road of unity or of fighting?

We must make our unique decision with our unique background in mind. We stand at this stage, at this crossroads: on the background of our Palestinian national consciousness, our long struggle, our intra-Palestinian dialogue, our strategic aim and our people's commitment to a united PLO. We must keep in mind the broad international support and solidarity expressed with the Palestinian cause, the Palestinian aspirations to establish an independent state, the hope which has begun to grow in the camps of vagabondage and among the crowds of poor, and the great love for Palestine. Our decision will also be affected by the Aden-Algiers agreement, the Fatah commitment to more dialogue and the Democratic Alliance commitment to PLO unity. We must pass through this difficult and destructive stage in order to restore unity to the revolution in another PNC session attended by all Palestinian factions. The PNC in Amman did not close the door to dialogue and discussion.

Before facing this coming stage we must pledge to control ourselves, our tongues and our actions. We must realise that we are first and foremost Palestinians. No one should attack, insult or revile others. It is time for this Palestinian bleeding to stop, for the national Palestinian consciousness to be rejuvenated, for the gradual death which began with the PLO's departure from Beirut to end.

What now? What after we have heard worldwide TV and radio broadcasts declaring an official "split" in the PLO? What now after the eruption of a division endangering us, our revolution and our very lives?

Let us begin from this very moment. Let every Palestinian assert for him or herself — including all factions, institutions, newspapers, students, workers and intellectuals — the need to preserve the unity of our people and to stop division.

Messianic Credo of Ultranationalism

continued from page 6

the law into their own hands and to prepare for the next round. "The hills of Judea and Samaria," they said, "are not the hills of Sinai or Yamit." But in the meantime, the rule of law had been undermined.

The first sign that something was afoot came with a series of terrorist attacks on the Arab population which completely sidestepped all legal norms. A large sector of the Israeli public and many Knesset representatives came out in support of the acts of the terrorists. Many saw the atrocities as courageous acts. The word on the street was: "A good Arab is a dead Arab." Those who condemned the actions of the terrorists were branded as "traitors"; they had "stabbed the nation in the back" and deserved the worst. After every Arab terrorist attack, statements like "Kahane's right" and "one can't trust the Arabs" gained wider acceptance. The extreme right increased its strength, especially among young people, who began to look up to people like Rafael Eitan and Kahane. Expressions like "drugged cockroaches," "two-legged beasts," and "Arabs — out!" began to be heard more and more.

The Jewish terrorists had ample reason to believe that they were not being sought after. The fact that the security forces did not haul them in for almost four years — a period during which they carried out scores of terrorist attacks — spoke for itself. Their capture sparked a public debate which revealed the extent of Israeli public support for these pseudo-messiahs who had been nourished by the philosophy of Nietzsche-Kook-Greenberg.

The lenient attitude of their guards during the first days of the trial and their behaviour in court made a travesty of legal procedure. During the first days of the trial they were given the freedom of the courthouse; one could meet them by the telephone booths, in the cafeteria or elsewhere. They arrived in song and turned every court session into a gathering of friends and family. Israeli public opinion was divided over the activities of the underground. Many saw them as heros and did not think they had done anything wrong. A Knesset lobby was formed which openly supported the underground suspects. Funds were collected to assist their families and a first-rate team of lawyers was hired to defend them.

Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek warned that the sympathy enjoyed by the underground detainees encouraged other young people to follow their example (he was speaking after the rocket attack on the Arab bus).

At present, the Kach movement operates freely and has won a number of new adherents on the street. Ultranationalism is gaining ground both among many religious teenagers and in underworld circles. Ben Shimoi's rocket attack proved him worthy of being made a member of Kach. The perverted ideology of Gush Emunim and the blind hatred of a large segment of Israel's marginal youth seem to be preventing the chance of an alternative to the present situation from emerging.

The joyous cries of support that echoed through the Bnei-Akiva Nahalim Yeshiva after the rocket attack reveal the extent to which the religious-nationalist camp has gone astray. Ben Shimoi's honourary membership in the Kach movement will no doubt encourage other young men to follow in his footsteps. He has become something of a neighbourhood hero.

The law is being trampled upon in everyone's sight. Jewish terrorism has put down roots. It is eroding the rule of law in the country and chipping away at the pillars of morality and justice.

The phrases used by MK's Cohen-Avidov, Eitan, Cohen, Waldman and Kahane or minister Sharon on the Knesset rostrum have provided fertile soil for the growth of Israeli fascism. (Translation: Al Hamishmar, November 7, 1984)

Studies Resume at Najah, Challenging Year Ahead

by Kate Rouhana

Classes resumed at Najah National University in Nablus December 3 after a four-month closure imposed by the Israeli military government. Crowds of students milled in the halls, embracing friends not seen since July and looking slightly bewildered after the impromptu extended vacation. Faculty members competed for maintenance staff to battle the thick blanket of dust that had settled on every surface, niche and crack of the sealed premises over the last four months.

Closure

The Israelis closed Najah, the largest Palestinian university in the West Bank, following a military raid July 29 in which 200 soldiers stormed the campus and confiscated two truckloads of placards, leaflets and magazines from a Palestinian cultural week exhibit.

The third annual exhibit, organized by the Student Council, included displays of Palestinian dress and books, West Bank industrial goods, local birds, and Palestinian magazines and newspapers published in the occupied territories. Authorities claimed to have found illegal and provocative material and model weapons among materials confiscated. University statements described the seized weapons as "toy models intended for use in a theatrical performance, available at any newsstand or toy shop in Israel and the occupied territories."

Off Limits

The four-month shutdown was the longest ever imposed on any West Bank university. Its conditions were severe: no one was to enter the university premises for any reason. As faculty and students were not forewarned of the closure, this meant ccmplete separation from books, files and research for four months unless one wished to scale the walls after midnight, risking a prison sentence if caught.

Besides regular classes, many previously arranged special lectures and seminars were cancelled. Bills for library subscriptions and equipment ordered remained unpaid. Windows left open the day of the abrupt closure stayed open for four months. Publication of the *Journal of Najah Studies*, originally scheduled for mid-August, was delayed to mid-January.

The university rented two apartments in Nablus for temporary offices for a few administrative members and staff to deal with student problems and maintain communication with the outside world. Salaries were paid despite the closure, severely straining Najah's finances. Otherwise, all university activities ground to a halt.

Najah students in temporary classrooms during closure.

Rallying Support

The Public Relations Office tried hard to rally support for Najah locally and overseas to pressure the new Israeli government to reopen the university. Public relations director Saeb Erakat told *Al Fajr*, "We issued five communiques appealing to the academic communities in Europe, the US, Latin America, Israel and Asia. We contacted universities, European political parties and foreign governments. Many wrote letters to the Israeli defense minister. A group of Palestinians and Americans met with US Envoy Richard Murphy who promised to help but could not. We were in touch with many Israeli Knesset members who came to the office to see the situation. We kept in constant contact with journalists, with our solidarity groups in France, Canada, the US and the UK, as well as with the eight consulates in Jerusalem. All these efforts did not succeed in changing Israeli policy."

A hint of a possible policy shift came during Prime Minister Peres' October visit to the United States. Peres stated that he was seriously considering measures to improve the quality of life in the West Bank, specifically mentioning reopening Najah before the four months' closure expired. However, Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin dismissed this possibility November 5.

"We've seen no signs of the new 'liberalization measures' in the West Bank," said Erakat. "We soon realized that the new Israeli government communicates on two levels: they show a liberal face to the West, but their daily practices are just a continuation of previous policies."

The Israeli military government pressured Najah's administration to guarantee that no more political activities, student activities, exhibits or demonstrations would take place at the university. If the administration would agree to this condition, they said, they might reopen Najah early. But the university refused to make such promises. "No sane person can ask for such a guarantee or give such a guarantee," said Erakat. "We don't have any policy on demonstrations. The students elect their student council each year. They decide what their reactions will be to various Israeli practices. We don't know about it and we don't interfere," he said.

President Returns

In mid-September Dr. Munther Salah returned from exile in Jordan to resume his responsibilities as president of the university. Salah, a computer scientist, was deported October 21, 1982 after refusing to sign a 'loyalty oath' denouncing the PLO as a condition for obtaining a work permit. Of twenty-five professors deported with him 14 have returned to work.

Munther Salah, President of Najah University

Salah took several steps to breathe new life into the muted institution. He moved the operating office to a second Nablus location, appointed a new administration and organised classes for the 800 fourth-year students originally scheduled to graduate September 22.

Department heads contacted students by phone and passed word that classes for seniors would resume October 15. Locations all over Nablus were scouted out for 'classrooms.' These included private homes, high schools, cultural centres, the workers' union and even a mosque. Dr. Afif Alawna, chairman of the economics department, described the bizarre seven-week stint: "Every hour, students had five minutes to run to a different location for their next class. Sometimes it was as far as two kilometres away, and many students don't have cars. It was very confusing." But the attendance record was impressive. "All students who were informed of the temporary classes came," he said.

Courses Condensed

This was not the first time Najah has been closed. Israeli authorities ordered the university shut for three months in 1983, from June 5 to September 1. The school lost an additional 34 days in 1983 when the army set up road blocks on a day basis barring access to the campus. Consequently, students and faculty now face a tight and grueling schedule. As the 1982-83 school year ended in early November 1983, the spring semester for the 1983-84 year began only on June 2, 1984. The university was closed less than two months later.

When school resumed this week, each year's class was on a different schedule. Fourth-year students, thanks to their extra seven-week session, are now expected to graduate by mid-December. Continuing first, second and third-year students will be taught condensed courses in order to finish their spring (1983-84) semester by mid-January 1985. They will immediately begin yet another condensed semester, planned for completion by April 1985. Finally, a new freshman class of 905 students was admitted by Najah and registered for classes December 3. They now commence a normal-paced 'fall' semester.

Students told *Al Fajr* that the interruption in their studies makes learning very difficult. They find it hard to continue courses they stopped in July. During the four-month hiatus many students took temporary jobs to pass the time productively, with little extra time for independent study. They say teachers also find it hard to pick up where they left off in July. Added to this lack of continuity is the accelerated course load. The condensed course programme the university is now compelled to initiate will mean extra hours in every course, weekly exams and possibly even some classes on Thursdays, usually a weekend day. "It's very complex," said one student. "The closure caused us a psychological shock," said another.

Perseverance

The problems that now confront Najah are immense. Compounding the difficulties from the Israelis are serious internal conflicts between student factions. Tension was so high in March 1984 that the university was compelled to close itself down for two weeks.

But the biggest cloud on the horizon is the mood of the Israeli military government which could always order another closure in the near future. "We hope very much there will be no more closures," said Erakat. "The military governors must remove the idea of collective punishment from their minds. It cannot work."

Students are not optimistic however. "It's clear why they closed the university," said Bahjat Jayusi, a fourth-year political science student. "The motive is political. They want to stop us from learning and to stunt the growth of the universities. They don't need any reason to close Najah again." Amin Makbool, a first-year student, agreed: "They have a plan to close all West Bank universities," he said.

Despite the complex situation, university officials continue to persevere. They believe Najah plays a very important role in the community by educating Palestinians and promoting a programme of voluntary work. This programme requires all students to perform community service for 30 hours as part of their studies.

Officials also point to Najah's rapid expansion since 1977 from a student body of 700 with 33 faculty members to one of 3600 with 350 faculty members. The administration is proud that in spite of closures and interruptions students generally manage to obtain a BA within four-and-a-half years because of condensed courses. Most importantly, they are determined to keep the university functioning whatever happens.